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Cover illustration: Site of Cassiodorus' monastery at Scyllacium, with fishponds. MS Herbo-
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Translated Texts for Historians
Volume 42

Cassiodorus
Institutions of Divine and
Secular Learning
and
On the Soul

Translated with notes by
JAMES W. HALPORN
and introduction by
MARK VESSEY

Liverpool
University
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A book of this sort relies on the work of a community of scholars both past and present. No one would better have understood that than Cassiodorus. I am, therefore, pleased to have this opportunity to recognize formally the contributions of other scholars to this translation of *De Anima* and *Institutiones*. I want to express my gratitude to James J. O'Donnell, Gillian Clark, and Carlotta Dionisotti for their invaluable reading and revisions of the translations, to Mary Whitby whose thorough editing of the text through to its final version added immeasurably to its presentation, and to Mark Vessey for his editorial comments and for providing a superb introduction to these early Christian works. Furthermore, I was extremely fortunate that the Widener Library and the Library of the Episcopal Divinity School made their rich collections available to me.

This, the first English translation of *De Anima*, is based on my 1973 edition of the text. The translation of *Institutiones* is based on R. A. B. Mynors' 1937 edition. I have used and attempted to improve on the first English translation of the *Institutiones* by Leslie Webber Jones.

To Barbara Halporn, who has been involved in this project for many years, let me say I'm glad she joined me for the journey.

J.W.H.

Cassiodorus' fishponds have their depths as well as shallows. For saving me from too often getting in over my head, and for netting fish I was too slow to see let alone catch, I have especially to thank Sam Barnish, Carlotta Dionisotti, Peter Heather, Paul Meyvaert, and James O'Donnell. Gretchen Minton was first to Squillace. Kevanne Kirkwood sent counsel from the Republic of Bobbio. Mary Whitby has been *amica post me legens sedula et benevolentissima lectione*; Job would have dropped his iron pen long before she despaired of my leaden one. Gillian Clark and, from a little farther off, Margaret Gibson gave constant warnings and encouragement. To James Halporn I am

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M.V.

*Vancouver;
January 2003*

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REFERENCES AND ABBREVIATIONS

WORKS OF CASSIODORUS

- An.* *De Anima*, ‘On the Soul’, ed. J.W. Halporn, CCSL 96
- Exp.Ps.* *Expositio Psalmorum*, ‘Explanation of the Psalms’, ed. M. Adriaen, CCSL 97–98. Trans. P.G. Walsh, ACW 51–53
- Inst.* *Institutiones divinarum et saecularium litterarum*, ‘Institutions of Divine and Secular Learning’, ed. R.A.B. Mynors, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1937 (= Mynors)
- Ordo* *Ordo generis Cassiodororum*, ‘Order of the House of the Cassiodori’. For editions and translation see below p. 14, n. 28.
- Orth.* *De orthographia*, ‘On Orthography’, ed. H. Keil, *Grammatici Latini* 7.143–210.
- Var.* *Variae*, ‘State Letters to Diverse Persons’, ed. A.J. Fridh, CCSL 96. Also ed. T. Mommsen, *MGH, Auctores Antiquissimi* 12. Selected *Variae* trans. S.J.B. Barnish, TTH 12. References below in **bold type** are to texts in this translation.

OTHER WORKS AND SERIES

- ACO *Acta Conciliorum Oecumenicorum*
- ACW *Ancient Christian Writers*
- Aug. *Augustine*
Civ. De civitate dei, *City of God*
Conf. Confessiones, *Confessions*
Doct.chr. De doctrina christiana, *Christian Teaching*
- BSV *Biblia Sacra iuxta Vulgatam Versionem*, ed. R. Weber
- CAG *Commentaria in Aristotelem Graeca*
- CAH *Cambridge Ancient History* (new edn)
- CHB *Cambridge History of the Bible*
- CLA *Codices Latini Antiquiores*
- CCSL *Corpus Christianorum, Series Latina*

<i>CPG</i>	<i>Clavis Patrum Graecorum</i>
<i>CPL</i>	<i>Clavis Patrum Latinorum</i>
<i>CSCO</i>	Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium
<i>CSEL</i>	Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum
<i>DHGE</i>	<i>Dictionnaire d'histoire et de géographie ecclésiastiques</i>
<i>EEChrist</i>	<i>Encyclopaedia of Early Christianity</i>
<i>EEChurch</i>	<i>Encyclopaedia of the Early Church</i>
<i>FOTC</i>	Fathers of the Church
<i>GCS</i>	Die griechischen christlichen Schriftsteller der ersten drei Jahrhunderte
<i>GGM</i>	<i>Geographi Graeci Minores</i>
<i>GLK</i>	<i>Grammatici Latini</i> , ed. H. Keil
<i>GLM</i>	<i>Geographi Latini Minores</i>
<i>LCL</i>	Loeb Classical Library
<i>LXX</i>	<i>Septuaginta</i> , ed. A. Rahlfs
<i>MGH</i>	<i>Monumenta Germaniae Historica</i>
<i>NPNF</i>	Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers
<i> OCD</i>	<i>Oxford Classical Dictionary</i> (3rd edn)
<i>ORF</i>	<i>Oratorum Romanorum Fragmenta</i>
<i>PG</i>	<i>Patrologia Graeca</i>
<i>PL</i>	<i>Patrologia Latina</i>
<i>PLRE</i>	<i>Prosopography of the Later Roman Empire</i>
<i>RE</i>	Pauly-Wissowa, <i>Realencyclopädie der classischen Altertumswissenschaft</i>
<i>RLM</i>	<i>Rhetores Latini Minores</i> , ed. C. Halm
<i>SChr</i>	Sources chrétiennes
<i>TTH</i>	Translated Texts for Historians
<i>TU</i>	Texte und Untersuchungen

NOTE ON THE USE OF THE WORD ‘BIBLE’

The word ‘Bible’ with upper-case initial letter is here used (like the adjective ‘biblical’) to refer to an ideal or imagined unity of sacred texts, usually corresponding to one or another of the canonical arrangements of (the) Scripture(s) in Christian tradition. The form ‘bible(s)’ is used of the physical books containing all or some elements of such a canon.

INTRODUCTION

THE LAST HOURS OF CASSIODORUS

God is laying his last slate to the roof,
The ceiling of my death is near complete,
The Vivarium must now live up to its name.

Fish in my stewponds circle silently;
Their free captivity is like the soul,
An endless round, then thrashing in a net.

Our state days pinioned in official letters,
The *Variae* of sound administration,
But Boethian birds still shun my volary.

Home to the South, to sad Scolacium
From Civilisation and a Library,
The sea spray drying on acacia leaves.

After me, what further barbarisms?
My pose is prayer but yet my head is filled
With the terrifying dissonances of God.

I have lived well past my statutory days;
The mapping pen has fallen from my hands,
A hundred years or more of beating wings.

Peter Porter

1. EPIGRAPH: TWO PEN-PORTRAITS OF ‘CASSIODORUS’

Roman readers of Cassiodorus’ time were used to finding portraits of famous authors in libraries and at the beginnings of books. Because no certified likeness of Cassiodorus has survived, readers of his works in the volumes of this series will find instead on their covers an image of his one-time master King Theoderic (TTH 12) and a view of the seawater fishponds (*vivaria*) of his country estate in Calabria. Cassiodorus did in fact leave two short accounts of himself—that is, of his life and writings—which will be considered in Section 2 below, but they are hardly eye-catching and seem to have had little impact on the later tradition concerning him. We therefore look elsewhere for figures of this author suitable to introduce his *Institutions* and *On the Soul*. Two vivid instances lie conveniently to hand, one in a poem (‘The Last Hours of Cassiodorus’) from a recent collection by a writer whose own ‘late work’ shows a curious penchant for late Roman themes,¹ the other in an illustrated page from one of the great manuscript treasures of early Christian Europe. If even such media cannot conjure the presence of a departed author, they may at least help evoke the historical puzzles posed to us now by his complex literary legacy.²

Peter Porter’s poem plays on an old conundrum. How do we know when our ‘last hours’ have come? Cassiodorus (c.485–c.585) may be thought to have lived long enough to recognize the approach of his. We happen to know that he was fond of clocks (*Inst.* 1.30.5). The present time of ‘The Last Hours of Cassiodorus’, which includes the period of the main work translated below, is imagined as a precarious interval between the ‘sound administration’ of a Gothic state run on Roman lines and a ‘barbarian’ future that has already begun. A selection of Cassiodorus’ ‘official letters’, the *Variae*, was given in TTH 12, with a concise placing of him in the political

1 Peter Porter, *Max is Missing* (London: Picador, 2001), 26, reprinted by permission of Macmillan, London. Also to be relished are his ‘Servants of the Servant of the Muse’, predicting ‘death in the stands / When the Cassino Catechumens play the Subiaco Saints’, and a book-list entitled ‘Ex Libris Senator Pococurante’ that includes ‘*The Hunnish Wars*, a propaganda feast / prepared by an ambitious consul / for home advantage, as full of lies as tedium.’

2 The ‘Epigraph’ attempts to present those challenges as succinctly as possible, without simplifying overmuch. The more leisurely introduction beginning at p. 13 below will lead back in the end to the same set of problems and proposed solutions.

history of sixth-century Italy.³ This volume is a sequel to that one. By the 550s, when Cassiodorus was engaged on what would become the *Institutions of Divine and Secular Learning*, the political order those letters of state had been written to uphold was a thing of the past. The reign of the Ostrogothic king Theoderic (493–526), whom he had served as a minister, was already ‘looked back on as a golden age’.⁴ The chance of maintaining a distinct and identifiably Roman polity in the West, even with leaders whose names sounded barbarous, had gone—forever, as it turned out. By the end of the sixth century, the chief repository and guardian of Roman values in Italy and the West would be the papacy, embodied in pope Gregory (590–604), later surnamed ‘the Great’.⁵ These are the prospects, as if prophetically foreseen, to which the Cassiodorus of Peter Porter’s poem ‘came home’ in his old age.⁶

That homecoming has stirred imaginations for some time now. In Peter Porter’s version, which may either reproduce a Renaissance vision of the sixth century as the beginning of the western ‘Dark Ages’ or else reflect a more recent, largely negative assessment of Cassiodorus’ own historical importance, the return ‘to the South’ is anything but sunny. The speaker’s patrimony at *Scyllacium* (also *Scolacium*) in southern Italy becomes the site of a dreary scholastic enterprise, dubbed by the poet ‘sad Scolacium’, as if to deny the place the ‘solace’ it almost spells in Latin. The next line, ‘*From Civilisation and a Library*’, seems placed for maximum ambiguity. Are we to believe that Cassiodorus turned his back on those great abstractions in heading south? That has not been the traditional view. Until a short time ago it was possible to conceive of him, if not as the ‘saviour of western

3 Barnish, *Cassiodorus: ‘Variae’* (TTH 12), ix–xiv. A parallel account, in a larger chronological and geographical survey, by Moorhead, *Roman Empire Divided*, 43–49. The social and political landscapes of Ostrogothic Italy are variously covered by Wickham; T. S. Brown; Moorhead, *Theoderic*; Heather, *Goths*, 216–58. The fullest and best briefing in the Roman institutional structures of Cassiodorus’ public career is still that of A.H.M. Jones. Averil Cameron’s *Mediterranean World* is an excellent short introduction to the late Roman milieu; for more detail see the essays in volumes 13 and 14 of the new *Cambridge Ancient History* (hereafter *CAH*).

4 Barnish, *Cassiodorus: ‘Variae’*, xiv.

5 See now Markus, *Gregory the Great*, commanding a broader view of the western ‘Roman’ realm and its Mediterranean relations at the end of the sixth century than the work of Cassiodorus will afford. Complementary perspectives in P. Brown, *Rise of Western Christendom*, 133–47; Rousseau, *Early Christian Centuries*, 280–312, both with helpful guides to further reading.

6 For the actual circumstances of this homecoming, which followed a period of ‘exile’ in Constantinople during the attempted Byzantine reconquest of Italy, see below p. 15.

civilization', then as one of the shapers—at Scyllacium—of the Latin, Christian civilization of the Middle Ages.⁷ And a recent, well-informed account of libraries and book-collecting in the ancient Mediterranean world ends with a tribute to him as the herald of a 'new age of library history'.⁸ So it may be that we should parse the sentence 'Home to... sad Scolacium / From Civilisation and a Library' to mean that those capitalized properties, firmly (re)located in the south, are the *sources* of as much solace as is now scholastically to be had: it will be drawn from them. On that view, 'the Vivarium' (as Cassiodorus' monastery was named) is called upon to ensure their future longevity. *Would* the place 'live up to its name' (line 3)? That is still a good question for historians, as we shall see. Rather than settle for one reading of the poem over another, we may for the time being leave its speaker in the uncertainty to which scholarship has fated him.

How did Cassiodorus become such an evocative yet equivocal figure? He has not always been a subject for poets, nor the quarry of historians. The evidence of his early posthumous reputation assembled in the first of two volumes in Migne's *Patrologia Latina* is meagre when compared with that for such luminaries of the Latin church as Augustine, Jerome or Gregory.⁹ An outline of his more recent fortunes will be given in Section 3 below. Two main tendencies can be noted at the outset. From the eighteenth century onwards, the master of Vivarium was the beneficiary and victim of a habit of scholarly piety that made him a forerunner of the so-called 'Christian humanism' of a time long after his own. This is the Cassiodorus who 'saves' civilization from the barbarians by providing monastic shelter for classical literary and philosophical texts at a moment of grave crisis for cultural institutions in the late Roman West. The second tendency, if less consciously edifying, is equally concerned with the dilemma that we have detected in Porter's line about 'Civilisation and a Library'. As modern historical scholarship has striven for finer, less prejudicial formulations of the processes summed up by Gibbon in the phrase *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*,

7 E.g. Bolgar, 36–37, treating Cassiodorus along with Augustine and Martianus Capella as engineers of a 'new civilisation' of the written book, destined to replace the oratorical culture represented by the likes of Cicero and Quintilian. There is much to be said for such a position, and some of it will be said again here. For a fond farewell to Cassiodorus as 'saviour of western civilization', see O'Donnell, *Avatars*, 71–91, 190–96, restating and mildly revising the 'deflationary' conclusions of his earlier (1979) *Cassiodorus*, a book that set the horizon for recent work on the subject (below pp. 91f).

8 Casson, 143–45.

9 *PL* 69, cols. 497–500. Cassiodorus is not among the authors commemorated in Isidore of Seville's *Versus in bibliotheca*. For a later poetic tribute see O'Donnell, *Cassiodorus*, 251 n. 46.

it has referred repeatedly to the personal itinerary of the man who compiled first the *Variae* and then, in another place and time of his life, the *Institutions*. In this context, what Porter presents as Cassiodorus' homecoming comes to stand for a larger historical turn or transformation, even—at the limit—for the 'conversion' or redirection of an entire culture.

As recent commentators have unfailingly remarked, Cassiodorus was among the first Latin writers regularly to use the adjective 'modern' (*modernus*) as a means of distinguishing the period of history in which they themselves lived from an earlier and 'ancient' time, perceived as qualitatively different from the present even if not very remote from it.¹⁰ This usage has been read as the symptom of an important shift in sensibility. Hence, whereas the 'Christian-humanist' conception of Cassiodorus draws him into a transhistorical community with his fellow scholars, the more secular historiography makes him the sign of a distinction of times. He is then no longer just a rival candidate with Boethius for the title of 'last of the Romans', an accolade the *Variae* by itself might have earned him. Instead, he becomes one of the first of the (last) Romans to observe the relative posterity of his own age, a man who could look back on 'antiquity' and embrace the realities of a different present and possible future. In practice, these alternative views are rarely so crudely stated or so neatly separated.¹¹ If versions of the latter nowadays prevail, that does not mean that all questions about Cassiodorus' place in the history of ideals and practices of Christian or 'humanist' learning and scholarship have been satisfactorily answered. Far from it. One purpose of the present introduction, to a book (the *Institutions*) that was itself intended as introductory to other readings, is to indicate how much remains unclear about Cassiodorus' relation to ideals of 'Civilization' and 'Library' that have structured our post-Roman, post-medieval and 'modern' historical consciousness. At the same time, these pages seek to present the main lines of an interpretation that would make allowance both for the *singularity* and the *exemplarity* of his oeuvre.

10 E.g. Curtius, 254, citing *Var.* IV.51.1; O'Donnell, *Cassiodorus*, 235, followed by Markus, *End of Ancient Christianity*, 219; Giardina, 72–75; and Stansbury, 60, with extensive references. Note *Inst.* 1.8.16 below, where the biblical exegesis of the fathers is contrasted with that of *moderni expositores*.

11 For a statement that judiciously combines elements of both and acknowledges the problem of temporal perspectives, see Reynolds and Wilson, 72: 'Cassiodorus appears in retrospect as a man of vision who foresaw the role which monasteries were to play in succeeding centuries, who grasped the crucial fact that with the disintegration of political life these retreats provided the main hope for intellectual continuity. But he also had a practical bent and an eye for detail in keeping with a long and successful career in the Ostrogothic civil service...'

And so to our second pen-portrait, as full of riddles as the first. Whatever libraries Cassiodorus may have left behind, historical accident and recent scholarly habit have all but immured him in one for eternity (see overleaf). Instead of his personal likeness, we have the image of a haloed scribe, dressed roughly in the manner of a Roman gentleman of the late empire but oddly decked out with the accoutrements of a Jewish high priest, a large book open on his knee, pen in hand, and with a bookcase standing open in the background to display nine *codices* (spine-hinged books of the proto-modern type) marked with abbreviations for successive sections of a complete canon of the Old and New Testaments. The image, found in a copy of the Vulgate Bible made at Bede's monastery of Wearmouth-Jarrow in Northumbria around the beginning of the eighth century is identified by a caption as that of the scribe Ezra, who was credited with restoring the text of Hebrew Scripture after the Hebrew people returned from exile in Babylon. Because there is some reason to think that this Northumbrian single-*codex* (or 'pandect') copy of the Bible may have been modelled on another produced a little over a century earlier at Scyllacium, scholars have now and again been tempted to see the writing figure in the picture as Cassiodorus in fancy dress.¹² The attribution is problematic, to say the least, but also *ben trovato*. Like Porter's poem, the Northumbrian Ezra confronts us with a vision of 'Cassiodorus' that is already part of a powerful tradition of representation. We should not expect to escape such traditions altogether. To put the same point more positively: as prospective readers of the *Institutions of Divine and Secular Learning*, we may usefully begin by (mis)taking the scribal figure in Bede's codex for Cassiodorus. No special knowledge of medieval manuscripts or art history is required. The bare description of the image, already given, will open our way.

Briefly, then: here is a man of superior social status, alone, engaged in an activity that was evidently regarded as of great importance for the community that he represented, surrounded by objects having a certain symbolic significance. If he were Cassiodorus, or a contemporary of his, what would be the meaning of the scene? Ignoring the caption with its reference to Ezra,

12 The bible in question, known as the *Codex Amiatinus* after the monastery in Tuscany to which it came by the eleventh century, is now in the Biblioteca Laurenziana in Florence (shelfmark Amiatinus I). For a good colour reproduction of the Ezra page, see the plate accompanying Marsden, 'Job in His Place', or type 'Codex Amiatinus' into any online search engine. Recent discussion favourable to the association with Cassiodorus, and further references, in Meyvaert, 'Bede, Cassiodorus'; Vessey, 'From *Cursus* to *Ductus*', 67–92. For reasonable doubts see now Nees, 148ff., with the comments of David H. Wright in *The Medieval Review* (online) 8 July 2000, and Gorman, 'Myths'. Also below pp. 52–53, 85.



Figure of Ezra from the Codex Amiatinus (after R. Marsden and R. L. S. Bruce-Mitford)

the abbreviated titles on the spines of the books, and the Jewish priestly gear, we can suggest two appropriate settings in the everyday life of elite members of late Roman society, neither of them specifically Christian. The first and more immediate to Cassiodorus as author of the *Variae* is that of the Roman imperial chancery, where official letters and laws were drafted, and at certain times (for example, under Justinian in the mid-sixth century) authoritative compilations made of legal rulings in the form of unitary codices or pandects.¹³ A second setting, no less familiar to him, would have been the collation and emendation of texts of classical authors carried out by late Roman literary professionals (grammarians, rhetoricians) and aristocratic amateurs, attested for the fifth and sixth centuries by the ‘subscriptions’ preserved in later copies.¹⁴

These legal-administrative and philological analogues are both directly relevant to the scene under consideration.¹⁵ As the mixed attire of the reading-and-writing figure in the Northumbrian bible already indicates, this is in some important sense a composite or hybrid portrait. The books in the picture are neither imperial law codes nor works of classical Latin authors such as Livy, Cicero or Virgil. Instead, they are the (Jewish and) Christian Scriptures, from Genesis to Revelation. The promotion of *those* writings—

13 Thus Barnish, ‘Sacred Texts of the Secular’, 362–63; Stansbury, 67–68, noting the analogy between Justinian’s *Institutions* as an introduction to the larger body of the *Digest* (or *Pandects*) and Cassiodorus’ work of the same name, introducing the study of Scripture and its commentators. For literary and other aspects of the legal culture of the late empire, see Matthews; Harries, chs 2–3; Honoré, *Law in the Crisis of the Roman Empire*, Tribonian and the article on ‘Law Codes’ in *Late Antiquity*, ed. Bowersock et al.; Liebs, ‘Roman Law’. These parallels could be extended to the papal chancery, where procedures closely followed civil precedent: Noble. Terminology: Halporn, ‘Pandectes’. Further discussion below n. 145.

14 *Subscriptiones*: Bischoff, *Latin Palaeography*, 183–85; Reynolds and Wilson, 39–43; Zetzel, 209–31; Alan Cameron, 52–54. On the cultural significance of these practices of correction, see Hedrick, 171–213. They were formally an extension of one routine of the Roman school-discipline of grammar, whose professional exponents had a well-defined place in the late Roman social order: Kaster, ch. 6 (‘Gentlemen and Scholars: The Social Relations of the Grammarians’).

15 They are probably also iconographically linked to it. (1) The furniture and scribal paraphernalia in the Ezra image recall the codices, bookcases, inkstands and other bureaucratic insignia in a directory of late imperial civil and military offices, the *Notitia dignitatum*: Berger; Merten, 310f. On the imperial administrative culture and its ideology see A.H.M. Jones, 1.321ff.; Teitler; C. Kelly, ‘Late Roman Bureaucracy’, ‘Empire Building’, and ‘Emperors, Government and Bureaucracy’; Barnish, Lee and Whitby, ‘Government and Administration’. (2) The pose of the studious figure—apart from the fact that he is now *writing* as well as reading—follows the tradition of representations of ‘men of the Muses’ in late Roman funerary monuments: Zanker; Vessey, ‘From *Cursus* to *Ductus*’, 59–64, 67ff.

of those ‘texts’ as we now say, using the English form of a Latin word (*textus*) that first acquired its modern sense in connection with the Bible—to a status similar to that accorded the laws of Roman emperors or the most venerated books of the illustrious authors of Rome’s pre-Christian, ‘pagan’ past is one of the defining features of the cultural revolution of late antiquity.¹⁶

If we were to fix an early date for the advent of such a universal religious text, it would be natural to cite the emperor Constantine’s commission in 332 for fifty copies of the ‘divine scriptures’ for the churches of his new capital, Constantinople, ‘to be written on well-prepared parchment by copyists most skilful in the art of accurate and beautiful writing’.¹⁷ In this matter as in others, however, imperial writ only ran so far. It would take several generations after Constantine, and the work of many hands and minds, to establish ‘the Bible’ as the central property and unifying code of a Roman world of values, ideas and practices. And by the time it happened, the Roman world itself was no longer a political unity, despite the best efforts of Constantine and his successors down to the time of Justinian. It may be more than simple accident that our first extant pandect or single-volume copy of the Latin Bible, containing the first visual representation of a ‘Roman’ reader in a complete library of Christian Scripture, comes from a monastery located near the outermost limit of Rome’s former empire, and that it was manufactured by men for whom the present-day city of Rome was an important source of Christian books. One of the books that their abbot, Ceolfriht, obtained on a visit to that city in 679–80 seems to have served as a model for this pandect.¹⁸ Whether the Italian exemplar was originally produced in Cassiodorus’ monastery at Scyllacium, as has been widely held, and whether it contained the prototype of the picture of the biblical scribe may never be known for certain. What is nonetheless apparent, as will be argued in detail below, is that the mystic image of the writer in the library depicted by those Northumbrian monks corresponds in many of its particulars to the programme of Cassiodorus’ *Institutions*.¹⁹ That is the justification for pursuing what may, strictly speaking, be a case of mistaken identity.

16 The main course of modern research on this topic is indicated below pp. 86ff.

17 For the text and import of Constantine’s commission, in a letter to and preserved by Eusebius of Caesarea, see Gamble, 79–80; Nees, 122–24. Against the traditional view, both scholars consider it unlikely that the copies were single-volume editions of the whole Bible; probably they contained the Gospels or the Psalter.

18 Meyvaert, ‘Bede, Cassiodorus’, 827–31.

19 It is unclear whether this text was known to Bede and his fellow monks of Wearmouth–Jarrow. Meyvaert, ‘Bede, Cassiodorus’, 835–39, argues that it was not; for the contrary view, see Corsano; Gorman, ‘Myths’.

In the career and writings of Cassiodorus, more clearly than in any other author of Latin late antiquity, we are able to watch the construction of an ‘ideal type’ of higher culture, one that can now be seen as occupying a critical position between those of poet, philosopher and orator known to ancient Greece and Rome, and that of the ‘intellectual’ variously personified in more recent times.²⁰ It is the type of the Christian reader-writer as successor of the Roman administrator and literary amateur, one whose mind is set on the kingdom of heaven but whose eye and hand are turned to a well-ordered body of texts, considered to be normative for the life of a society on earth.²¹ As *clericus* or simply *litteratus* the figure of this man-of-letters would one day be as sharply etched on the social fabric of western Europe as that of his double, the knight or man-at-arms.²²

Cassiodorus did not invent this Christian role or persona. Nor did he claim any author’s rights in the script that he provided for those who might choose to play it alongside or after him. It had been tried out by many before him, rehearsed in a variety of styles by men of the late Roman empire whose intellectual culture, social status, and professional aptitudes were broadly comparable to his, and who at some point in their lives decided to make the tenets and texts of Christianity their chief occupation.²³ The great period of creative improvisation lay back in the mid- to late fourth and early fifth centuries, the time of those Greek and Latin ‘fathers’ of the church whom Cassiodorus revered and held respectfully apart from *moderni* such as himself. In some early cases—those of Jerome, Augustine and their aristocratic contemporary Paulinus of Nola being among the more spectacular—the adjustment of traditional Roman assumptions about social status and public service to the emergent demands and opportunities of an imperially sanctioned Christian religion was represented at the time as a radical break with the past, an experience of ‘conversion’. But that was a passing phase. By the end of the fifth century, with Christianity established as the ambient ideology of all public and private undertakings throughout the empire, including those western parts where barbarian peoples had lately settled, the language of ‘conversion’ had been domesticated in a separate social sphere:

20 Although the term ‘intellectual’ does not come into use until the end of the nineteenth century, it has been applied by analogy to much earlier periods: e.g. Le Goff; Zanker; Copeland.

21 Given the antecedents of this cultural type, its male gendering is inevitable. But not final. For signs of early adaptation to women writers see Smith.

22 See also Debray.

23 Marrou, *History of Education*, 265ff.; A.H.M. Jones, chs 15–16, 22, 24; Averil Cameron, ‘Education and Literary Culture’.

the monastery. Roman ‘paganism’, or the set of ideas and practices that Christians had chosen to designate by that pejorative term, was no longer something that needed to be rejected, still less any kind of threat to the dominance of Christian ways of life and thought. ‘There was no pagan culture now [except of course beyond the bounds of Roman culture itself]. Christians had made it thoroughly their own.’²⁴ If there was a religious choice to be made, it would henceforth be between a dedicated (ascetic, monastic) Christian lifestyle and ordinary Christian living ‘in the world’. Some members of the clergy, including bishops such as Gregory the Great, found a middle or double way that combined both options.²⁵

In sum, the situation of the Roman Christian man of learning had changed since the days when Augustine taught rhetoric in an imperial capital and Jerome simmered in the Syrian desert, and it was changing still under the pressure of political events. Meanwhile, a large collection of the writings of these and other Christian writers of earlier generations lay more or less readily to hand. As we shall see, Cassiodorus’ use of that accumulated textual stock was to be at once exceptional, the reflex of his own experience and talents, and resolutely unoriginal. Its relative lack of originality is what makes it historically precious. Here, as if in laboratory conditions, we can study processes that would otherwise have to be inferred and extrapolated from a range of other, more fragmentary and more problematic materials. Whatever the later influence of Cassiodorus’ personal initiatives turns out to be, however fully ‘the Vivarium’ is judged to have ‘live[d] up to its name’, the evidence of his work-in-progress can help us better understand the challenges once faced by individuals of his stamp, the resources on which they drew, and the measures they took.

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The remainder of the Introduction falls into three parts: Section 2 traces Cassiodorus’ career and literary activity from the period of the *Variae* to that of the *Institutions*, making a special place for a work that stands in a curious and potentially revealing relation to both, and is therefore also included in this volume, the treatise *De anima* or ‘On the Soul’. Section 3 is devoted to the *Institutions*. In ‘Genesis and Models’ we consider the overall conception of the work and its generic relationship to earlier attempts at the codification

24 Markus, *End of Ancient Christianity*, 221. Markus’s treatment of Cassiodorus in the final pages of this book already encapsulates much of the present argument.

25 A nuanced account of these alternatives and their evolution in the West from the time of Augustine to that of Benedict, Gregory and Cassiodorus is provided by Leyser.

and institutionalization of Christian learning; the characteristic as well as derivative quality of Cassiodorus' enterprise should thereby begin to appear. 'Composition and Contents' takes the form of a continuous reading of the *Institutions*, following the twists and turns of this multi-layered treatise from its opening directions to its closing prayer: Book 1, 'The Bible and Christian Authors', and Book 2, 'The Liberal Arts'. Certain paragraphs amplifying key issues have been set apart as excursions; these are marked off by horizontal rules. Having come to the end of the text as Cassiodorus left it, we return at more length to the scholarly debate on the 'Reception and Historical Significance' of the *Institutions*. Section 4, 'Epilogue', sums up the interest of this work as a document of the transformation of the Roman world.

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Readers wishing to have before them an outline of the sometimes rambling first book of the *Institutions* will find one at p. 63 below. They are asked to bear in mind, however, that this is only one possible representation of the material, and that its plausibility depends on the reading that precedes it. Book 2 presents no such analytical challenge, being the first truly compendious statement of what has since become familiar as the curriculum of the seven liberal arts. For a summary view of Cassiodorus' place in the longer history of 'encyclopaedic' culture, see below pp. 27–37, 64–69, 76–79.

2. THE WRITER, HIS LIFE AND WORKS

Cassiodorus, we have said, left two accounts of his own life's work.²⁶ The earliest, which survives only in an adaptation by a later hand under the title of *Ordo generis Cassiodororum* ('Order of the House of the Cassiodori'), listed his accomplishments down to c.538(?), when he would have been in his late forties or early fifties:

Cassiodorus Senator²⁷ was a man of great learning, and distinguished by his many honours. While still a young man, when he was legal adviser (*consiliarius*) to his father, the Patrician and Praetorian Prefect Cassiodorus, and

²⁶ An earlier version of parts of this section appeared in my 'From *Cursus* to *Ductus*', 71–77; material reused with the publisher's permission. For modern editions of literary works mentioned here and below, see *CPL* nos. 896–909; Di Berardino, 217–32; and the list of Abbreviations (above p. ix). There is a convenient short biographical notice on Cassiodorus by O'Donnell in *Late Antiquity*, ed. Bowersock et al. For more detail see Momigliano, 'Cassiodoro'.

²⁷ 'Senator' was apparently a personal name, though his father's status would have given him the rank of *vir clarissimus* before his own office-holding earned him that of *vir inlustris* and

delivered a most eloquent speech in praise of Theoderic king of the Goths, he was appointed Quaestor by him, also Patrician and Ordinary Consul, and, at a later date, Master of the Offices and <Praetorian Prefect. He submitted> *formulae* for official documents, which he arranged in twelve books, and entitled *Variae*. At the command of king Theoderic, he wrote a history of the Goths, setting out their origin, habitations, and character in twelve books.²⁸

The notice combines literary information with the *cursus honorum* of a Roman statesman of the late empire.²⁹ To be bibliographically complete, it should also have mentioned an annalistic history marking the consulship of prince Eutharic in 519, and other speeches in praise of Gothic royalty like the one that first brought the speaker into favour.³⁰ Together with the list of offices held, from *consiliarius* to Praetorian Prefect, the record of literary and oratorical performance—panegyrics, *Chronicle*, *Gothic History*, *Variae* or ‘State Letters to Diverse Persons’—was impressive testimony to a career in public administration that spanned more than the three decades. Indeed, the literary and political records are not easily separable.

Following the assassination in 535 of Queen Amalasuintha, daughter and *de facto* successor of Theoderic, an army of the eastern emperor under general Belisarius undertook the reconquest of Italy. In 540 Byzantine forces entered Ravenna, seat of Roman government in the West since the early fifth century, and put an end to the Ostrogothic regime. As its most

full senatorial status. In documents of his political career he appears as (Flavius) Magnus Aurelius Cassiodorus Senator. The medieval habit of calling him ‘a senator’ begins with Bede (below n. 40).

28 *Ordo generis Cassiodorum* (also known as *Anecdota Holderi* after the nineteenth-century scholar who first drew attention to the text), trans. Barnish, *Cassiodorus: ‘Variae’*, xxxvi. The reference to Cassiodorus’ tenure of the prefecture was conjecturally restored by T. Mommsen and is not certain; the source document for the *Ordo* could date from before 533. The *Ordo* is transmitted by one family of manuscripts of Cassiodorus’ *Institutions* and may have been redacted in his monastery; see below p. 39. Editions of the Latin text with commentary by Galonnier; O’Donnell, *Cassiodorus*, 259–66; see also Milazzo. Only *Variae* VI–VII consist strictly of *formulae* or standard forms, though many of the other letters have been semi-‘formalized’ by the omission of names and dates.

29 For the official functions listed here and Cassiodorus’ discharge of them, see *PLRE* 2.265–69; O’Donnell, *Cassiodorus*, 57ff.; Barnish, *Cassiodorus: ‘Variae’*, xxxix–liii; Vander-spoel.

30 Cf. Cassiodorus, *Var.* (I–X).praef. and **IX.25**. Fragments of panegyrics survive in a seventh-century manuscript. The lost *Gothic History* was a source for Jordanes’ *Getica*: after Momigliano, ‘Cassiodorus and Italian Culture of His Time’, see Barnish ‘Genesis and Composition’; Heather, *Goths and Romans*, 3–67 and ‘Historical Culture’; Troncarelli, *Vivarium*, 9 n. 6, 14.

eloquent spokesman, Cassiodorus may then have been sent under guard to Constantinople. He was in the eastern capital by 550,³¹ but there is no sure sign of his whereabouts in the intervening decade. Towards the end of 554 the emperor Justinian issued his Pragmatic Sanction, restoring peace in Italy under Byzantine rule and allowing exiles to recover their property. Then if not before, Cassiodorus was able to go back to the family estate at Scyllacium (Squillace) on the Adriatic coast of Bruttium (the modern Golfo di Squillace, Calabria). Among the charms of this property he counted the fishponds (*vivaria*) cut into the rocks below the villa (*Var. XII.15.4*). On his return from Constantinople, if not before then, the site became home to a religious community, to be known as the ‘Vivarian monastery’.³²

At the age of 92, Cassiodorus set down a list of his ‘complete works’ (*totius operis nostri*) in the preface to a digest of orthographic rules compiled for the monks of Vivarium. He describes how

after (1) the *Explanation of the Psalms*, on which by the Lord’s favour I expended my first labour in the time of my conversion;

and after (2) the *Institutions* on how to understand divine and human texts, in two books of (I think) ample size, wherein you will find more of utility than of elegance;

after (3) the *Explanation of the Epistle to the Romans*, from which I removed the perversities of the Pelagian heresy, urging others to do the same for the remainder of the commentary [on the Pauline epistles];

after (4) the collection which by the Lord’s favour I made of the *Arts* of Donatus with their commentaries, a book of etymologies, and another book by Sacerdos on figures of speech and thought, so that the simpler brethren, being instructed, might be able to make sense of texts of this kind without confusion;

after (5) the book of headings (*tituli*) collected from Scripture, which I called the *Reminder*, because it allows those who have no appetite for long readings quickly to review the contents;

after (6) the *Summaries* of the Apostolic Epistles, Acts, and Revelation, in which those texts are expounded as briefly as possible;

finally, in my ninety-third year and with the Lord’s help, I have come (7) to the excerpting of my beloved orthographers, and if I have succeeded in gathering their flowers—of those, that is, that I undertook to abridge—into a

31 On his time at Constantinople see Barnish, ‘Work of Cassiodorus’, 158–65.

32 *Inst.* 1.29: *Vivariense monasterium*. For reconstructions, drawing on material remains and early documentary evidence, including illustrations in early medieval manuscripts of the *Institutions*, see Courcelle, ‘Site’, ‘Nouvelles recherches’ (summarized by O’Donnell, *Cassiodorus*, 194–99); Zinzi.

single work, then, unless I am mistaken, the corrector and scribe will no longer suffer confusion.³³

This catalogue is almost but not quite biographically continuous with the one preserved by the *Order*. The publication of the last work mentioned there, the *Variae*, seems to have coincided (c.538) with the initial impulse towards the first listed here, the *Explanation of the Psalms*, which in its present state is the latest of two or more recensions.³⁴ The next work listed, the *Institutions of Divine and Secular Learning*, has been called the ‘rule’ of the Vivarian community, though an earlier draft of part of it may have been conceived for another, more courtly context; it too was revised several times.³⁵ Item 3, the expurgation of a commentary on the Pauline Epistles attributed to the early fifth-century heretic Pelagius is referred to as work in progress at *Inst.* 1.8.1 and was completed by Cassiodorus’ disciples.³⁶ Item 4 represents one state of the grammatical collection (*codex de grammatica*) mentioned at *Inst.* 2.1.3; it comprised the *Ars maior* and *Ars minor* of the fourth-century Latin grammarian Donatus, commentaries on each of those works (cf. *Inst.* 2.1.1), a guide to etymology, and a treatise *De schematibus* (‘On Figures’) by a third-century grammarian. Item 5, the *Liber memorialis* or ‘Reminder’, has not survived; it collected the chapter-headings (*tituli* or *capitula*) that Cassiodorus liked to see prefixed to books of the Bible.³⁷ The *Complexiones* or ‘Summaries’ (6) is a series of short paraphrases on the books of the New Testament after the Gospels. The *Orthography* completes the cycle of seven, a mystical number which Cassiodorus hoped would make the list more memorable.³⁸

Complementary as they are, the lists of works in the *Order* and *Orthography* are also perfectly exclusive of each other. Simply juxtaposed, they could be taken to represent two separate literary lives, linked only by the name of an author, ‘Cassiodorus’. Given the hazards of authorial attribution in a manuscript culture, it is remarkable that later tradition never gave birth to twin Cassiodori, each of whom would have lived to a ripe age in one half of the sixth century.³⁹ But for the writer’s precision in stating his age, and the

33 *Orth.* pref., ed. Keil 144.

34 Below p. 36.

35 Below pp. 39f. For variant forms of the title in the MS tradition see Mynors, lii–liii.

36 See Johnson.

37 *Inst.* 1.1.10, 1.2.13 and note.

38 Stansbury, 62–67, places the contents of this catalogue in the larger context of Cassiodorus’ biblical-exegetical oeuvre.

39 For the medieval legend of two saints, ‘Cassiodorus’ and ‘Senator’, see *DHGE* 11.1349.

trail of autobiographical references that he leaves elsewhere, it could easily have done so. Medieval readers of Cassiodorus' work were ready enough to sharpen the division between his personalities. Bede, who probably knew only his *Explanation of the Psalms*, speaks of him as 'formerly a senator, suddenly [!] a doctor of the church', and is echoed by John of Salisbury in the twelfth century, who calls him 'a convert from paganism, senator turned monk, orator turned doctor of the church'.⁴⁰ This split biography, for which Cassiodorus himself is largely responsible, has shaped the reception of his works down to the present.

The publishing by authors of full lists of their writings was not common in the classical world. The first Latin writer to catalogue himself publicly in this way was Jerome, who rounded off his chronological inventory of Christian authors, the *De viris illustribus* ('On Famous Men') or *De scriptoribus ecclesiasticis* ('On Church Writers') with a list of his own works to date (AD 392/3). Three and a half decades later, Augustine compiled an annotated list of his major works, in order of their composition, which he entitled *Retractationes* ('Revisions').⁴¹ The genre of collective biographies and bibliographies goes back to Alexandrian scholars of the Hellenistic period. Under Jerome's influence it continued into the Latin Middle Ages.⁴² The first supplement to Jerome's catalogue was produced by Gennadius, a priest of Marseilles, in the mid-fifth century.⁴³ Jerome's and Gennadius' catalogue entries follow a pattern: (1) author's name, (2) office or status (e.g. bishop, monk, layman) and other distinctions, (3) literary works. As Barnish has pointed out, the notices in the *Order of the House of the Cassiodori* use the same arrangement.⁴⁴ This could have been a feature of the source-document, composed by Cassiodorus himself and addressed to another high-ranking functionary of the Romano-Gothic regime.⁴⁵ Or it may have been

40 Bede, *In Ezram* 2.7; on this English author's knowledge of Cassiodorus, see Meyvaert, 'Bede, Cassiodorus', "'In the Footsteps of the Fathers'"; and the divergent view of Corsano; Gorman, 'Myths'. John of Salisbury, *Historia pontificalis* pref. Cf. Paul the Deacon, *Historia Langobardorum* 1.25: *Cassiodorus primitus consul, deinde senator, postremo monachus exstitit*.

41 English trans. by M.I. Bogan, FOTC 60.1–322.

42 Momigliano, *Development of Greek Biography*, 65–100; Rouse and Rouse; Blum.

43 English trans. of Jerome–Gennadius by E. C. Richardson, NPNF 2nd ser. 3.359ff., and of Jerome's catalogue on its own by T.P. Halton, FOTC 100.

44 *Cassiodorus: 'Variae'*, xxxv. Besides the notice on Cassiodorus himself, the *Ordo* includes information on Symmachus, consul of 485 and author of a (lost) Roman history, and his son-in-law, the philosopher Boethius, both of whom were executed by Theoderic on charges of treason in 523–24. The nature of their 'family' connections with Cassiodorus is debated.

45 On the addressee, Flavius Rufus Petronius Nicomachus *alias* Cethegus, see *PLRE* 2.281–

imposed by the later redactor, working at Vivarium where copies of Jerome and Gennadius lay to hand (*Inst.* 1.17.2). In either case, the format of the ecclesiastical notice was adapted to a different content: there is nothing specifically ‘Christian’ about Cassiodorus’ bio-bibliography down to the year 538 as it appears in the *Order*.

Contrastingly, the life and work commemorated in the preface to the *Orthography* are defined in strictly religious terms. It is hard to believe that Cassiodorus did not have copies of his *Orations*, *Chronicle*, *Gothic History* and *Variae* at Squillace. Yet he nowhere alludes to these compositions in his writings of the Vivarian period and reckons none of them among the seven works listed in his total oeuvre. After Varro’s *Hebdomades* (an album of 700 portraits and notices), the number seven had some resonance in Latin memorials of famous men. For Cassiodorus its significance is primarily biblical and Christian.⁴⁶ Whereas the *Order* epitomized the patrician *cursus* of the late Roman empire with its literary by-products in panegyric, propagandist history and state correspondence, the *Orthography* inscribes the figure of a specialist in Christian texts.

As we have seen, Cassiodorus refers in his *Orthography* to the *Explanation of the Psalms* as the first work that he composed ‘in the time of his conversion’. Pace Bede and John of Salisbury, this does not necessarily make it the testimony of any radical change. By the sixth century the age of dramatic conversions from Roman paganism, if it ever existed outside Christian triumphalist mythography, had passed.⁴⁷ Late ancient notions of Christian conversion, especially those articulated in monastic milieux from the fifth century onwards, laid more emphasis on continuance in a style of life than on any signal moment of crisis.⁴⁸ Cassiodorus was born into a Roman social elite that identified itself as Christian. He made his career as an official and publicist of (Arian, non-‘Catholic’) Christian rulers. The fact of his ‘conversion’, as he later called it, need have entailed no sudden renunciation of his previous activities. Nor did it, so far as we can tell. And yet in the course of time, a rift opened in his description of himself as a producer of texts. It is worth considering how this hyphenation of a life’s (literary)

82. He is associated with Cassiodorus in Constantinople in a text of 550. The date of the source-document for the *Ordo* is uncertain; some scholars put it near the end of Cassiodorus’ career in Ravenna, others at Constantinople a decade or so later: see now Troncarelli, *Vivarium*, 16–19.

46 I. Hadot, 192.

47 See P. Brown, *Authority and the Sacred*, 3–26.

48 Thus O’Donnell, *Cassiodorus*, ch. 4 (‘Conversion’).

labours came about. An important set of clues can be found in a little work which, appearing in neither list, neatly marks the division of the bibliographies of the *Order* and *Orthography*.

On the Soul

In the general preface to the *Variae*, Cassiodorus stages a dialogue between himself and the admiring friends at court who urge him to publish his official correspondence. He is too busy, he says. They insist. At length he yields. He will gather the material in twelve books and entitle them *Variae*, since, having ‘had various persons (*varias personas*) to admonish, I had to adopt more styles than one’.⁴⁹ This diversity of utterance is claimed as an application of the rhetorical principle of adapting one’s speech to the listener. The same theme recurs, with an interesting reversal of perspective, in a separate preface to Books XI and XII. The earlier books comprise documents issued by Cassiodorus on behalf of the monarch. Now he will add two more to represent his tenure of the prefecture (533–38), ‘so that I who through ten books have put words in the mouth of royalty shall not remain unknown in my own person (*ex persona propria*)’.⁵⁰ In a first draft, he then bemoans his many burdens and lack of leisure for the constant reading that alone fosters true eloquence.⁵¹ At some point, probably in the course of the year 538 and before final publication of the *Variae*, he returned to the text and inserted the following sentence: ‘But after I had brought this work of ours to its desired close in twelve books, my friends compelled me to expound the substance and virtues of the soul, so that we should be seen to speak of that thing [i.e. the soul] by means of which we have spoken of so much else.’

In the *Explanation of the Psalms* Cassiodorus would refer to his work *On the Soul* as ‘contained in the thirteenth book of the *Variae*’.⁵² The same link with twelve preceding books is made in the opening sentence of the treatise itself, where he claims to have been coaxed into further writing by some dear friends (1). Surely, they suggest, a man to whom it had been granted to reveal the deep secrets of the Gothic state could also impart what

49 *Var.* (I–X).pref. 15. On the occasion, character and content of the *Variae*, see (in addition to TTH 12) O’Donnell, *Cassiodorus*, ch. 3; Giardina; Jouanaud; Gillett; Bamish, ‘Roman Responses’.

50 *Var.* XI.pref. 6.

51 *Ibid.* 8: *iugi lectione*; cf. 9: *matre lectione*.

52 *Exp.Ps.* 145.2. This authorial arrangement is respected by several classes of manuscripts of the *Variae*; see Halporn in CCSL 96.512–13, 526–27. The *De anima* is also found with *Inst.* 1: Holtz, ‘Quelques aspects’, 294.

his reading had taught him about the soul. The subject was familiar: ‘The soul we search for is always with us, present, acting and speaking.’ The ancient sages had given counsel to ‘know thyself’. Of all that human beings aspired to know and explain, the human soul as the faculty of knowledge and discourse ought to have priority. There follow twelve questions on the soul (*de anima*).

Cassiodorus’ answers are as lucid and methodical as they are philosophically undemanding. Presumably that is why his *De anima* proved so popular with medieval readers.⁵³ Most of the topics addressed had been the subject of repeated discussion since Plato and Aristotle, and had already precipitated a large literature in both Greek and Latin. Several Latin Christian authors had written at length on the nature and functions of the soul, among whom Augustine alone seems to have exercised a significant influence on Cassiodorus. (He is the one authority cited by name.) The commonplace quality of the opinions attributed by Cassiodorus to non-Christian teachers makes source-criticism difficult. With few exceptions, the views he reports were the stock-in-trade of late ancient Platonism, readily assimilable and already assimilated to a platonizing Christian anthropology.⁵⁴ No obvious models have been found, however, for the sections on telling bad persons from good (12–13), which it is tempting to see as reflexes of the author’s own experience at court, miniature sketches for the more elaborate advice of such later Italian courtiers as Baldessare Castiglione and Niccolò Machiavelli.⁵⁵ Subsequent chapters on the life of the soul after the death and resurrection of the body (14–15) and on the vision of God (16), though presented as the fruit of wide reading, are visibly shaped by the final books of Augustine’s *City of God*. When all twelve questions have been answered and the answers recapitulated, didacticism modulates into exhortation as Cassiodorus summons the ‘wisest men’ to turn from the world to God, and finally into praise and prayer (17–18).

The progression from speaking or writing in many styles on behalf of others (*Var.* I–X), to speaking or writing for one’s official self (*Var.* XI–XII), to speaking about the faculty in virtue of which one speaks and writes and

53 CCSL 96.516–19; D’Elia, *Antropologia*, 39–43 (use by Rabanus Maurus).

54 CCSL 96.508–11, with the textual parallels recorded in the apparatus; Mathon, 2.114–40; Di Marco (who notes a residue of Stoic notions of the corporeality of the soul); D’Elia, *Antropologia*, 23ff. O’Donnell, *Cassiodorus*, 116ff., provides an analytical summary of the argument.

55 Cf. Jordanes, *Getica* 35.182 on the physiognomy of Attila the Hun, a passage probably taken over from Cassiodorus’ *Gothic History*.

knows oneself (*An.* [=Var. XIII] 1–16), to finally speaking to God in a spirit of self-abnegation (*An.* 17–18) marks an oratorical career similar to that described by Augustine in his *Confessions*, another work whose proportions changed in the process of composition and which finally filled thirteen books.⁵⁶ It is possible to be a little more precise than this. The main Augustinian source for Cassiodorus' *De anima* is the dialogue *De quantitate animae* ('On the Magnitude of the Soul'), one of Augustine's first compositions after his baptism at Milan in 387. Various textual parallels and borrowings have been noted, but the most important occur at the outset. The interlocutors in the earlier work are Augustine and his friend Evodius. It begins:

- E: Since I see you have ample leisure, I would ask you to answer my questions on certain matters which are, I think, of timely and proper concern to me. Often in the past, when I have asked you many things, you have seen fit to put me off with some Greek saying or other which forbids us to seek after things that are above us; yet I do not think that we ourselves are above ourselves. Therefore, when I ask about the soul, I do not deserve to be told, 'What is above us does not concern us,' but instead perhaps to hear what we ourselves are.
- A: Briefly list the things you would like to be told concerning the soul.
- E: I will, for long meditation has made them familiar to me. I would like to know where the soul comes from, of what nature it is, of what magnitude (*quantitas*), why it should have been given to a body, and what becomes of it both when it enters the body and again when it departs from it.⁵⁷

A comparison of this exchange with the first section of Cassiodorus' treatise shows the latter to be an amplification of the former. The single interlocutor of Augustine's work is replaced by a unison of friends, a Socratic dictum is expanded with commonplaces, six questions become twelve. Whatever real conversations prompted the author of the *Variae* to open a thirteenth book, its textual occasion was a dialogue with Augustine.

Augustine's early dialogues, or as many of them as he may have read by the late 530s, would have supplied Cassiodorus with a model of philosophical discourse as the convivial activity of cultured men in temporary retirement from public affairs. For him as for Augustine, the arch-exponent of that way of life was Cicero, who had skilfully fused an ideal of the Roman orator-politician with one of leisurely philosophical withdrawal. Another writer commemorated in the *Ordo generis Cassiodororum*, Boethius, had adapted Ciceronian precedent to his enforced leisure to produce the

⁵⁶ Cf. Barnish, *Cassiodorus: 'Variae'*, xxv, with other possible analogies. The concluding prayer of the *De anima* is thick with reminiscences of Augustine's confessional rhetoric.

⁵⁷ Augustine, *De quantitate animae* 1.1 (CSEL 89.131).

Consolation of Philosophy.⁵⁸ The hypothesis of a late imperial, courtly equivalent of the Ciceronian literary paradigm—civic-minded, philosophical, oratorical—can account for most of the impulses behind the thirteenth book of the *Variae*. Read in this light, the little treatise *On the Soul* conforms to the profile of Cassiodorus as Roman statesman presented by the *Order*.⁵⁹ It is also broadly faithful to the course of Christian intellectual endeavour plotted by Augustine's philosophical dialogues.⁶⁰

In one important respect, however, the Cassiodorian 'dialogue' exceeds the brief given by Cicero and by Augustine at his most Ciceronian. At the beginning of the treatise, the author distinguishes between two sources of teaching on the soul, or more precisely between two classes of books, 'sacred' and 'secular' (*An.* 1). Unknown to Cicero, at least in this form, and nowhere so starkly stated by Augustine in his writings of the 380s, that distinction was to be decisive for Cassiodorus' subsequent literary production.⁶¹ In retrospect, it already announces the textual universe whose cosmography was to be the *Institutions*.

3. INSTITUTIONS OF DIVINE AND SECULAR LEARNING

In Cassiodorus' view, all Latin literature was to be mobilized towards transmitting the Scriptures. All the aids previously used so as to read and copy classical texts were to be used to understand the Scriptures and to copy them intelligently. Like a newly formed planetary system, Latin culture as a whole was supposed to spin in orbit around the vast sun of the Word of God.⁶²

58 Lerer, 32–45. Troncarelli, *Vivarium*, 9, describes the method of *On the Soul* as 'exquisitely Boethian'. Curiously, however, the *Consolation* is not included in the list of Boethius' works preserved by the *Order*. According to Chadwick, 'Cassiodorus shows no knowledge of the *Consolation*, either in his *Institutes* (where he would hardly have had reason to mention it) or, more significantly, in the "Anecdota Holderi"...' (254). It is possible that closer study of the *Variae* will reveal a familiarity not otherwise attested. Meanwhile, Troncarelli has argued that Cassiodorus had a hand in the early transmission of the *Consolation*; see e.g. his 'Più antica interpretazione'.

59 The philosophical concerns of the treatise are consistent, moreover, with a political ideology that saw 'Romanness' (written law, education, and the individual and collective moralities they engendered) as part of a divinely guaranteed order. At this level, the coherence of Books I–XII with Book XIII of the *Variae* is unproblematic. See Heather, 'Historical Culture', 320–32.

60 An order Cassiodorus would easily have been able to follow, if he already knew Augustine's *Retractationes*; see above p. 17 and below p. 35 n. 108.

61 O'Donnell, *Cassiodorus*, 117.

62 P. Brown, *Rise of Western Christendom*, 150.

As the servant of Gothic kings, Cassiodorus was used to dating every document he issued. Conversely, his own life was punctuated by offices and titles marking the upward curve of a civil career. These public series of dates and honours, so useful to modern historians in their ordering of past events and texts, come to an end in his case c.537.⁶³ Tentative chronologies can be constructed for the remaining forty-five years or so of his life, but few if any of their coordinates are firm. Whatever continuing or occasional involvement Cassiodorus may have had in affairs of state after the Byzantine reconquest of Italy, the legible trace of his Roman public career terminated with his prefecture. In the preamble to the *Ordo generis Cassiodororum* he is first called ex-Patrician, ex-Consul, ex-Quaestor, ex-Master of the Offices; his present or final status is then given as ‘monk, servant of God’.⁶⁴ The change of style entails a change of temporality. As God’s servant, Cassiodorus had no further ‘career’ in the Roman sense of a *cursus honorum* that could be incised, title by title, on a public memorial. Instead he entered upon a condition of life that would continue uninterrupted until his death. As the structure of his biography changes, so does that of his bibliography. As a *conversus*, Cassiodorus becomes the author of texts whose validity is meant to be without date, *formulae* to outlast even those of Var. VI–VII. Having closed the last of his books of state, he began redacting a religious work (*opus*) in many parts, eventually itemized in the *Orthography*. That work would be subject to revision by the author and his collaborators as long as he lived and to further alteration by his disciples after his death.

Although not mentioned in the *Order*, the treatise *On the Soul*, as a kind of coda to the *Variae*, remains attached to Cassiodorus’ public career and is therefore datable within fairly narrow limits.⁶⁵ From then on we are dealing with a chronologically ‘open’ work. Topical allusions in the preface to the *Explanation of the Psalms* allow its first recension to be dated to a time between the author’s retirement as Praetorian Prefect and his departure from Ravenna (i.e. 537?–40); dates of later additions and revisions can only be conjectured.⁶⁶ The case of the *Institutions* is similar. While the preamble traces the origins of the work to the mid-530s, the text we now have is the

63 Barnish, *Cassiodorus*: ‘*Variae*’, liii.

64 O’Donnell, *Cassiodorus*, 260.

65 Pricoco, ‘Spiritualità monastica’, 368–69, convincingly accounts for the omission of the *De anima* from the list of Cassiodorus’ works in the preface to the *De orthographia* as a sign of the division between two regimes of textuality, the latter (Vivarian) defined by its primary orientation to the text of Scripture. See also below pp. 66–69.

66 Below pp. 35–36.

result of a redactional process that clearly stretched over decades. For some parts of it, notably Book 2 as a whole, plausible composition histories can be made out.⁶⁷ More generally, however, the *Institutions* calls for a reading that attends to both the temporal and the atemporal aspects of the work, replacing it in the ‘life’-histories of Cassiodorus and of the intellectual communities with which he was associated, without removing it from the idealized realm of Christian texts envisaged by the preface to the *Orthography*—an ideal that was itself the product (though not the end) of a conceptual-imaginative process involving many individuals over several generations.

Genesis and Models

A School and Library at Rome

From the opening sentences of the work we learn that these ‘introductory books’ were to resume elements of a prior, unrealized project in Christian higher education (1.pref.1). During Cassiodorus’ prefecture, he and pope Agapit (535–36) had tried to raise funds for a Christian school in Rome.⁶⁸ The schools of grammar and rhetoric, to which the sons of well-to-do families were sent for instruction in the arts displayed in the *Variae*, were still flourishing in that city.⁶⁹ Neither there nor elsewhere, however, were there any comparable institutions of Christian learning. The idea of a Christian ‘school’, in the sense apparently intended by pope and prefect, was a novelty. For centuries, the essentials of Christian doctrine had been imparted in the baptismal catechism and rehearsed in the liturgy. The few who felt called to a higher knowledge might organize themselves into communities where the meditation of Scripture formed part of a rule of life. Such, in broad terms, was the tradition of coenobitic or communal monasticism since the later fourth century.⁷⁰ But if Cassiodorus’ analogy between the respective courses of ‘secular’ and ‘scriptural’ studies is more than a rhetorical conceit, then the Christian academy proposed by him and Agapit was not to be just another monastery. What could it have been?⁷¹

⁶⁷ Below pp. 39–41.

⁶⁸ Riché, 129–35. On the events and achievements of this pontificate, see *Liber pontificalis* 59, ed. Davis 54–55; J.N.D Kelly, *Oxford Dictionary of Popes*, 58–59. Agapit died while on a mission to Constantinople on behalf of the Gothic king Theodohad.

⁶⁹ Riché, 26–31.

⁷⁰ For orientation see now Rousseau, ‘Monasticism’.

⁷¹ Cf. Illmer, 49f.; O’Donnell, *Cassiodorus*, 184–85; Barnish, ‘Work of Cassiodorus’, 175–78.

The preface to the *Institutions* names two instances of publicly supported instruction in the science of Scripture, the first associated with Alexandria, the second with Nisibis in Syria.⁷² The ‘school’ of Nisibis was a contemporary reality, though one of which Cassiodorus probably knew little before his stay in Constantinople.⁷³ That of Alexandria was a distant memory, preserved by texts of Eusebius and Jerome.⁷⁴ While both would make encouraging precedents, we may doubt whether either by itself would have been sufficient to inspire the project of a Roman academy. Cassiodorus’ instincts for the training of secular functionaries must have counted for something.⁷⁵ There is evidence, as well, of another stimulus: that provided by books and the vividly imagined presence of their authors.

Among the few Roman memorials of Agapit’s short papacy is the record of an inscription in elegiac couplets that once adorned the interior wall of a library on the Caelian Hill. It was the explanatory text or *titulus* for a fresco running above the bookcases:

A venerable company of saints is seated in a long row (*ordine longo*),
Teaching the mystical sayings of the divine law.
Among them, as is right, sits bishop Agapit,
Who by art founded this beautiful place for books.

72 Oddly, the transmitted text has the school in Nisibis conducted for Jews, *Hebraeis*. For discussion of the problem see Fiaccadori; Barnish, ‘Work of Cassiodorus’, 175.

73 His main source was an African named Junillus, Quaestor of the Sacred Palace in the 540s and author of an introduction to biblical exegesis entitled *Instituta regularia divinae legis* (CPL 872; cf. Cassiodorus, *Inst.* 1.10.1) based on a work by Paul of Nisibis. On Junillus see PLRE 3A.742; Riché, 163–64; O’Donnell, *Cassiodorus*, 133–34 and 247–49 (transmission of the *Instituta*).

74 Eusebius, *Ecclesiastical History* 5.10–11 and 6, which is the source for Jerome, *On Famous Men* 36 (Pantaenus), 38 (Clement), 54 (Origen). See Duval, 340. As pointed out by Marrou, *History of Education*, 327, this imagined ‘School of Sacred Literature’ in second- and third-century Alexandria was the affair of a few outstanding individuals, not an enduring institution.

75 Cf. *Variae* (I–X). **praef.8**, where that work is claimed as a means of ‘educat[ing] uncultivated men who must be trained for the service of the state in conscious eloquence,’ with *Inst.* **pref. 1**: ‘...learned teachers from whom the faithful might gain eternal salvation for their souls and the adornment of chaste, pure eloquence for their speech’. Such statements are still broadly faithful to the traditional ideals of Roman public discourse represented by Quintilian’s *Institutio oratoria* or ‘Oratorical Training’, a work which was clearly one of the (partial) analogues for Cassiodorus’ *Institutions*: below p. 55. For the importance of *reading* in the training of specialist speakers and counsellors, cf. *Var.* VI.19.3–4, VII.5.3–5, **IX.21.1**, **XI.praef.8–9** (above n. 51). In order for an activity to count as a learned discipline in the Roman view, it had to have its own body of texts or *litterae*.

All partake of the same grace, all share in the same holy labour;
 Their words may vary, but in faith they are one.⁷⁶

The ‘saints’ making up this ‘venerable company’ were the Christian expositors of Scripture of earlier generations, the ‘fathers’ (*patres*) as Cassiodorus also calls them. If we posit a link between the Caelian library and the project of a new Christian school, the contrast in the first sentence of the *Institutions* between the well-supported study of ‘worldly authors’ (*mundani auctores*) and the lack of provision for the teaching of Scripture acquires a concrete reference. In the vision of Agapit’s mural, the Bible is the object of a distinct pedagogy in which contemporary or ‘modern’ masters like the bishop of Rome join with the fathers in a collective task of instruction. That there could already be assembled so long a row of Christian teachers, or at least of their books, might itself appear to be an argument for a Christian institute of higher learning. An order of instruction was implicit in the order of Christian books, which the new school would have made manifest—had the wars of the 530s not overtaken its prospective founders.⁷⁷

Other substantial collections of Christian books already existed by this time in Rome and elsewhere in Italy.⁷⁸ The projectors of the new academy could also have taken hints from the treatises of Jerome and Gennadius *On Famous Men*.⁷⁹ These catalogues were being used as acquisitions guides for Christian libraries by the ninth century and may have served similar purposes at an earlier date; as we shall see, they probably helped structure the *Institutions*.⁸⁰ Tradition would have favoured Rome for the site of a Christian ‘university’ dedicated to the study of biblical and patristic texts. The possession of a well-equipped private library had long been a mark of status for members of the urban elite,⁸¹ and past emperors had

76 See Marrou, ‘Autour de la bibliothèque’, 125ff., for Latin text and discussion. A roughly contemporary fresco from the Lateran in Rome shows Augustine seated with an open codex (of the Bible) before him, expounding the *mystica sensa* of the sacred text (cf. *mystica dicta* in the Caelian inscription); the image is conveniently reproduced by Gamble, 163, pl. 6.

77 For the idea of an ‘order of books’ see Chartier; its application to a late antique setting: Vessey, ‘Forging’, ‘*Epistula Rustici*’. On the importance of *ordo* in the *Institutions*, below p. 42.

78 Courcelle, *Late Latin Writers*, 331–34 (Dionysius Exiguus); Riché, 131–34; Gamble, 161–65; Grebe. For the activity of Viliaric, book-merchant (*bokareis* in Gothic) in Ravenna in the reign of Theoderic, see Bischoff, *Latin Palaeography*, 184f.; Bertelli, 53–55.

79 Above p. 17.

80 De Ghellinck, 2.247f and below p. 35.

81 Reynolds and Wilson, 33–37, describe a domestic-bibliographic milieu in which the author of the *Ordo generis Cassiodororum* would have been at home; see also Caltabiano.

endowed the city with public libraries, Greek and Latin.⁸² To pro-Gothic servants of the western church and state such as Agapit and Cassiodorus, the idea of raising the prestige of the empire's old capital by making it a centre of higher Christian education may have seemed an attractive way of asserting Italian claims to cultural independence in the face of Byzantine hegemonic strategy of the mid-530s. As pope, and despite (or because of) the Arianism of his temporal masters, Agapit would also have had an interest in maintaining the reputation of the see of St Peter as a beacon of 'Catholic' Christianity. If it was to be more than a pious fiction, the ideal of a single faith authoritatively expressed in many voices (line 6 of the library epigram) would need to be backed by a reliable collection of texts of the major Christian teachers of past centuries, and not only of those who had written in Latin.⁸³

Past Masters: Jerome and Augustine

At *Inst.* 2.5.10 Cassiodorus refers to a treatise *On Music* that he had once consulted in a library at Rome; the context suggests that this was the library founded or refounded by pope Agapit.⁸⁴ A text of Martianus Capella's *Marriage of Philology and Mercury* was probably revised in those precincts in the early 530s.⁸⁵ Books on the so-called 'liberal arts' were thus, it seems,

82 The double library founded by Trajan (Casson, 84–88) was still in place in the mid-fifth century, according to Sidonius Apollinaris, who refers in his *Letters* 9.16.3 to 'the authors... of both libraries' (*auctores utriusque... bibliothecae*). Note the same writer's allusion to the threefold literary culture of his friend Claudianus Mamertus, the Christian philosopher—Roman, Greek and Christian: *triplex bibliotheca... Romana, Attica, Christiana* (4.11.6).

83 Two other contemporary signs of a desire for Christian doctrinal unity in bibliographic (and linguistic) diversity: the Lateran portrait of Augustine (above n. 76), with its caption: 'Diverse fathers [have said] diverse things, but this one said everything, thundering the mystical meanings [of Scripture] with Roman [i.e. Latin] eloquence'; the pseudo-Gelasian decretal *De libris recipiendis et non recipiendis* ('On Approved and Prohibited Books'), a sixth- or seventh-century compilation falsely attributed to Pope Gelasius I (492–96), in which an 'orthodox' canon of biblical and post-biblical Christian literature is separated from 'apocrypha' in both kinds (*CPL* no. 1676). See also below p. 51.

84 O'Donnell, *Cassiodorus*, 184, *contra* Cappuyns, 1389, who supposes that Cassiodorus had a library of his own in Rome.

85 Marrou, 'Autour de la bibliothèque', 157ff; doubted by Courcelle, *Late Latin Writers*, 335, and after him by Riché, 133 n. 211. The subscription in Zetzl, 218; with the expression *contra legente*, referring here to a *discipulus* who reads from a parallel text for the purpose of emendation, compare Cassiodorus, *Inst.* 1.pref.8, *amicis ante me legentibus* ('as my friends read aloud to me'). On the place of Martianus' work in the Latin tradition of the liberal arts see below p. 65.

to be found close by others on the Bible and theological subjects. We have observed that the distinction between ‘sacred’ (or ‘divine’) and ‘secular’ (or ‘human’) texts was a datum of Cassiodorus’ treatise *On the Soul*. It is repeated in the full title of the *Institutions* and its arrangement into two books, the former devoted mainly to the Bible and Christian authors, the latter to ‘the arts and disciplines of liberal studies’ (1. pref. 6). This division appears natural enough to anyone formed in western intellectual culture of later ‘Christian’ centuries, but it was not an inevitable outcome of the gospel of Jesus Christ. Cassiodorus is the first to enshrine it in a comprehensive and detailed programme of study.

His masters in this domain were the two greatest Latin fathers of the later fourth and early fifth centuries, Jerome and Augustine. Between them they supplied him with a rationale for distinguishing the categories of ‘divine’ and ‘secular’ knowledge and for combining their respective textual resources in a single pedagogy. The influence of Augustine, especially his early dialogues, has been noted in *On the Soul*. Following a well-established tradition, the newly ‘converted’ Augustine of the late 380s regarded the poets’ tales of gods and heroes as lies and immorality. He did not, however, see any faultline running between ‘pagan’ or classical learning as a whole and the Christian philosophy he had lately espoused; one of his projects of the 380s was to adapt the cycle of liberal studies so as to provide a step-by-step ascent to the contemplation of spiritual realities.⁸⁶ Nor, despite his dawning sense of the uniqueness of the Christian scriptural revelation, did Augustine immediately make biblical texts the measure of all science. In these respects, the later treatise *De doctrina christiana* (‘On Christian Teaching’, begun 396/7) and the *Confessions* (c.397–402?) register important developments in his thinking. By the mid-390s Augustine had become a public preacher and publishing teacher of Christianity. He had also read more widely in ecclesiastical writers of his own time, including the works of the scholar-monk Jerome. It was Jerome, refashioning a polemic of the second-century theologian Tertullian for the new elites of the post-Constantinian church, who imposed the division between scriptural and secular learning in the form that hardened in the Christian thought of later Latin antiquity and the Middle Ages.

A summary of positions taken by these two church fathers, and of Cassiodorus’ adaptation of certain Augustinian principles in his *Explanation of the Psalms*, will provide a second vital context for the *Institutions*.

⁸⁶ On his *Disciplinarum libri* see below pp. 65–67.

According to Jerome, mastery of the liberal arts—he had in mind especially grammar (the study of Latin language and literature), dialectic and rhetoric—was admirable only when combined with and subordinated to expertise in biblical interpretation. Thus in his catalogue of *Famous Men* he praises one writer for his erudition ‘both in the Scriptures and in secular learning (*saeculari litteratura*)’ and the works of another for an eloquence derived ‘as much from the divine Scriptures as from the resources of secular learning’.⁸⁷ His continuator in bio-bibliography, Gennadius of Marseilles, goes further and evokes, perhaps for the first time in Latin, a divine *litteratura* analogous to the secular or human kind.⁸⁸ In this context, *litteratura* or the commoner *litterae* (as in one form of the title of Cassiodorus’ *Institutions*) is not yet equivalent to ‘literature’ in the modern sense of an objectifiable body of texts, though it may already have been approaching it by semantic attraction to an increasingly objectified canon of Scripture. The dominant, interconnected notions behind the word are (1) the written resources of learned (‘classical’) culture; (2) disciplinary expertise, the kind of advanced literacy that resulted from study of the works in question; and (3) the character attributable to a person who possesses such expertise. As a classically trained *vir litteratus* or man of letters, who by his own confession (in the famous Letter 22 to Eustochium) had been ‘converted’ to the study of Scripture, Jerome was bound to allow that different kinds of literacy, secular and divine, could be joined in one individual.⁸⁹ That did not prevent him from disdaining qualities of classical literary culture displayed by others, if only to promote his own contrastingly ‘scriptural’ activity. While sharing a common Christian anxiety about the delusions of pagan poetry, he saved his loudest contempt for the excesses of declamatory rhetoric. This ideologically—if by no means always stylistically—anti-Ciceronian Jerome was congenial to Latin monastic writers of the fifth and earlier sixth centuries, who were quick to confirm the biblical coordinates he had set for Christian literary culture.⁹⁰ It is less certain how attractive he would initially have been

87 *On Famous Men* 36 (Pantaenus), 38 (Clement); note the Alexandrian lineage (above n. 74). Though Tertullian may have suggested it to him, the pairing of *scriptura(e)* and *litteratura* seems to be Jerome’s device.

88 *On Famous Men* 11 (Evagrius of Pontus: *divina et humana litteratura insignis*), 68 (Salvian of Marseille: *h. et d. litteratura instructus*). The application of these epithets to two notable monks reveals the author’s ascetic bias.

89 A position clearly stated in his Letter 53 to Paulinus of Nola; for Cassiodorus’ knowledge of this text see below n. 101 and p. 58.

90 Markus, *End of Ancient Christianity*, 187ff.

to a successful public orator like Cassiodorus, who could still claim Cicero as his primary model in 537, whose first distinctively 'Christian' work was a 'Ciceronian' philosophical dialogue, and who would speak of the projected Christian school at Rome as a place where the faithful would learn eloquence.⁹¹ Conveniently for him, however, Augustine was on hand with hints for a more conciliatory position.

In the account he gave of his own life in the *Confessions*, the bishop of Hippo had made classical rhetoric in general and his own public practice of it in particular the symbols of worldly ambition and of a self-seeking mentality wholly at odds with the love of God. But that was not to be his last word on the subject. In Book 4 of the *Christian Teaching*, composed towards the end of his life, he offered a rationale for eloquence that would serve in later times as one of the great bridges between classical literary values and Christian religious profession.⁹² Cassiodorus was among the first to cross it.

Explaining the purpose of the second book of his *Institutions*, Cassiodorus claims that students of Scripture will better understand certain portions of the sacred text if they have prior knowledge of the liberal sciences (*liberalium litterarum*). For 'it is well known that the elements of these subjects were sowed (as it were) in the beginning of spiritual wisdom, and that secular teachers (*doctores saecularium litterarum*) afterwards cleverly transferred them (*transtulerunt*) to their own rules, as perhaps we have shown at a suitable place in our *Explanation of the Psalms*' (1.pref.6). The hypothesis, here somewhat obscurely phrased, is that all the wisdom of the ancients from the time of Plato was plagiarized from Moses and the Hebrew prophets.⁹³ This curious theory had been advanced as early as the second century by Christian apologists, who took it over from Hellenistic Jewish writers; in that sense it was 'well known'. But one would search hard to find it articulated by any Latin Christian writer more recent than Augustine, who again seems to be Cassiodorus' primary authority, if not necessarily his only source.⁹⁴

91 *Variae* (XI–XII), pref. 8 (cf. *Inst.* 2.2.8: 'Cicero, the chief light of Latin eloquence'); *Inst.* pref. 1.

92 For aspects of the medieval and later reception of the *Christian Teaching* see English; also below pp. 33–35. Its first two and a half books were composed in 396/7, the remainder c. 427.

93 There is a clearer statement at *Inst.* 1.4.2, again referring to the *Exp.Ps.*

94 See Hagendahl, *Von Tertullian zu Cassiodor*, 92, 112, who also cites Tertullian and Ambrose. Cassiodorus' consistent use of the verb *transferre* for the process of pagan appropriation may reflect the latter's influence. The earlier history of this topos of Christian apologetic is reviewed by Young, 49–75.

Of several passages in the *Explanation of the Psalms* to which the cross-reference ('as perhaps we have shown') could point, the most obvious is in a chapter of the general preface entitled 'On the Eloquence of the Divine Law as a Whole'. The same text provides a short way of understanding how the author of the *Variarum* came to the task of biblical commentary. The eloquence of the Bible, we learn, is even more marvellously varied than his own.

The divine law exploits its varieties of language (*genera locutionis*) in sundry ways, being clothed in definitions, adorned by figures (*schematibus*), marked by its special vocabulary, equipped with the conclusions of syllogisms, gleaming with forms of instruction (*disciplinis*). But it does not appropriate from these a beauty adopted from elsewhere, but rather bestows on them its own high status. For when these techniques shine in the divine Scriptures, they are precise and wholly without fault, but once enmeshed in men's opinions and the emptiest problems, they are disturbed by obscure waves of argument. What in the Scriptures is unshakeably true often becomes uncertain elsewhere... Those experienced in the secular arts, clearly living long after the time when the first words of the divine books were penned, transferred these techniques to the collections of arguments which the Greeks call topics, and to the arts of dialectic and rhetoric. So it is crystal clear to all that the minds of the just were endowed to express the truth with the techniques which pagans subsequently decided should be exploited for human wisdom. In the sacred readings (*lectionibus sacris*) they shine like the brightest of stars, aptly clarifying the meanings of passages most usefully and profitably.⁹⁵

In support of these generalizations Cassiodorus quotes a passage from Book 3 of Augustine's *Christian Teaching* which states that the tropes or modes of expression (*modos locutionum*) taught by secular grammarians may also be

95 *Exp.Ps.* pref. 15, trans. Walsh, *Cassiodorus: 'Explanation of the Psalms'*, 1.37–38. Cf. 6.2: 'First we must come to know that the Lord's omnipotence has so enriched his eloquence most fully by various teachings and skills (*variis disciplinis atque artibus*) that it shines out with wondrous adornment on those who seek it, and grants them the seeds of diverse teachings when they are diligently contemplated. It is because of this that we find in holy Scripture all that the masters of secular literature have transferred to their own writings'; 23.10: 'You masters of secular literature, realise that from here have flowed forth your figures of speech, your proofs of different kinds, your definitions, your teachings about all disciplines, for in such writings you find enshrined what you realise was said long before your schools existed.' For discussion of this theory and its application in the *Exp.Ps.*, see Schlieben, 189ff.; O'Donnell, *Cassiodorus*, 158–62; Walsh, *Cassiodorus: 'Explanation of the Psalms'*, 1.15–19; Weissengruber, 'Educazione profana'; Astell.

found in the biblical text.⁹⁶ In its original context, the statement is almost parenthetical, an aside in a longer discussion of the problem of ‘ambiguous signs’ in Scripture. Immediately after the sentences quoted, Augustine had written: ‘It is not fitting... that I should here explain such matters to those who are ignorant of them, lest I seem to be teaching the art of grammar. Rather, I advise that they be learnt outside [the church], as indeed I suggested earlier, that is, in Book 2, where I treated of the necessary knowledge of languages.’⁹⁷ A related matter arises in Book 4, where Augustine demonstrates the presence of rhetorical devices in the writings of St Paul and the Old Testament prophets (4.6.9–21.50).

Augustine’s *Christian Teaching* has been called the ‘founding charter of a Christian culture’.⁹⁸ The culture it advocates is essentially literary and, more specifically, *scriptural*. Imitating Cicero’s brief for the Roman orator, Augustine sets out to give precepts for the Christian teacher, here defined by him—after Jerome, among others—as an exponent of the Scriptures (*tractator scripturarum*). The first three books deal with procedures for discovering the sense of biblical texts, the fourth with techniques for conveying that sense persuasively to others. The work could thus be seen as constituting a Christian equivalent of the interpretative part of ‘grammar’ combined with ‘rhetoric’. But Augustine is careful not to use such terms of art in describing what he is about. If he had once hoped to raise a Christian philosophy on scaffolding supplied by the disciplinary categories of pagan intellectual culture, by the time he undertook this work he had come to believe in the theoretical autonomy of a Christian education centred on the Bible. As is often the case in his writings, however, theoretical conviction fuses with the dictates of commonsense practicality. The Christian teacher will obtain his learning from whatever sources are most convenient, including—with due

96 *Doct.chr.* 3.29.40. Cassiodorus also refers more generally to Augustine’s treatise on the modes of expression in the first seven books of the Old Testament, the *Locutiones in Heptateuchum*, both for the principle that the Bible contains tropes recognized by secular grammar and for the fact that it contains other stylistic figures particular to itself. He adds that Jerome, Ambrose and Hilary had taught the same.

97 Note that this cross-reference occurs just after the point (3.25.35/6) at which Augustine broke off the first draft of this work c.397, around the time he began the *Confessions*. The remainder of Book 3 and the whole of Book 4 date from c.427.

98 Marrou, *Saint Augustin et la fin*, 413. In an abundant but very uneven modern literature on the *De doctrina christiana*, Marrou’s is still the best general treatment. For recent discussion see Irvine, 178–89; Markus, *Signs and Meanings*; Pollmann, *Doctrina christiana*; Arnold and Bright; C. Harrison, 46–78.

precaution—the schools of the grammarian and rhetorician, or the books of pagan philosophers.⁹⁹

That does not mean that institutions of learning ‘outside the church’ have any intrinsic value for Augustine; from the point of view of his ideal Christian pedagogy, they are things indifferent. The discourses of grammar, dialectic, rhetoric and other putatively ‘liberal’ arts are merely so many contrivances, methods of arranging and recalling information that is either (1) pertinent to human life in society or (2) derived from study of the divine order of the universe and the providential succession of events in time. In subdividing these two kinds of knowledge (*doctrinae*) in Book 2 of his treatise (2.19.29–42.63, esp. 25.38ff.), in order to measure the usefulness of each for the teaching of the Truth revealed in the Bible, Augustine eschews the traditional disciplinary rubrics, referring to ‘knowledge of languages’ instead of grammar, to ‘precepts of disputation’ instead of dialectic and rhetoric, and using other circumlocutions for other ‘arts’. His purpose is to suggest that the familiarly named secular disciplines, though they may have staked out part of the subject matter of an ideal biblical *doctrina*, are neither necessary nor natural containers of it. On the contrary, everything truly precious in the apparatus of pagan intellectual culture has either been perverted from its divinely ordained end or else forms part of the common property of human beings living together (as God intended) in society. The task of the Christian intellectual is to reappropriate these materials for divine instruction, in the manner of the ancient Israelites who carried off the gold, silver and fine garments of their Egyptian captors.¹⁰⁰ Earlier Christian writers show how this is to be done.¹⁰¹

As a theoretical justification for Christian use of devices associated with the classical *paideia*, Augustine’s *Christian Teaching* would hold its place

99 See e.g. *Doct.chr.* 2.40.60, 4.3.4.

100 *Ibid.* 2.40.60–61, referring to Exodus 3:22ff. The image of the ‘spoils of the Egyptians’, first applied in this sense by Origen, was to have a long life in Latin Christian literature.

101 *Ibid.* 2.40.61: ‘Do we not see what a freight of gold, silver and clothing that sweet-tongued teacher and blessed martyr Cyprian carried out of Egypt with him? Or likewise Lactantius, Victorinus, Optatus and Hilary—to speak only of those already dead—with innumerable Greeks? And that faithful servant of the Lord, Moses, had formerly done the same, of whom it is written that he was “learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians” (Acts 7:22).’ Augustine’s use of this argument is marked by his reading of Jerome’s Letter 53 to Paulinus (above n. 89): Doignon; Vessey, ‘Conference and Confession’, 190–91. Cassiodorus reproduces it verbatim, with additional examples, at *Inst.* 1.28.4, as part of a preamble to his own résumé of the liberal arts in Book 2. On the relation between Cassiodorian and Augustinian schemes of the liberal arts see further below p. 78 and Pollmann, ‘Re-Appropriation and Disavowal’.

into the Renaissance and beyond. As a guide to the implementation of a 'Christian culture' in the earlier period, it took a great deal for granted. Confident, as he could afford to be at the time of writing, that late Roman educational institutions 'outside the church' would continue to supply trained recruits for the clergy, Augustine saw no need for Christian handbooks of grammar or rhetoric.¹⁰² Rhetorical principles could if necessary be inferred from the practice of biblical and later Christian writers (4.1.2, 3.4). For some other kinds of specialized knowledge useful for the understanding of the Bible, a number of handbooks already existed (e.g. on Hebrew names and expressions, on biblical chronology) and others might be produced (e.g. on biblical geography or natural history) (2.39.59). A set of hermeneutical rules had already been drawn up by the African Christian writer Tyconius, which Augustine inserted into his own treatise when he finally completed it c.427 (3.30.42–37.56). That is the limit of the direct instruction provided by the *Christian Teaching*.¹⁰³

In his *Explanation of the Psalms* Cassiodorus undoes the most original feature of the theory of disciplinary knowledge expounded in Augustine's *Christian Teaching* to make a significant innovation in Christian educational practice. As if to confirm the (strictly untenable!) hypothesis that the secular disciplines were 'transferred' from the Hebrew Bible, he presents the Psalter as a virtual encyclopaedia of the liberal arts. Concluding his discussion of Psalm 150 on a point of dialectic, he states: 'We have shown that the series of psalms is crammed with points of grammar, etymologies, figures, rhetoric, topics, dialectic, definitions, music, geometry [and] astronomy.'¹⁰⁴ Augustine would have granted as much, but would not have considered it worthwhile to use those 'points' to reconstitute the liberal sciences in question, which would be like making Egyptian vessels from veins of God-given metal. That is precisely what Cassiodorus does, by encouraging readers of his commentary to collect annotated examples of each kind of usage under the headings of 'figures', 'etymologies', 'rhetoric', 'topics', 'syllogisms', 'arithmetic', 'geometry', 'music' and 'astronomy.' At some stage he added a set of marginal signs (*notae*) to draw attention to references to each of the disciplines.¹⁰⁵ In

102 In this respect, Cassiodorus' *Institutions* would mark a significant step beyond the conditions of late classical literary culture: see further below pp. 99f.

103 Cf. Marrou, *Saint Augustin et la fin*, 400–01, with apposite reference to the later projects of Pope Agapit and Cassiodorus.

104 *Exp.Ps.* 150.6 (trans. Walsh).

105 A list of these signs appears before the preface in manuscripts of the *Exp.Ps.*; see CCSL 97.2 with O'Donnell, *Cassiodorus*, 160–61, and esp. Halporn, 'Methods of Reference'. In addition

this way he ‘made of the Psalter a textbook in the liberal arts’.¹⁰⁶

Signs of sustained reflection on the lessons of Augustine’s *Christian Teaching* are hard to come by in Latin literature of the first century after its completion, a period during which the main initiatives in the elaboration of a Christian culture were taken by men who hewed to the line of ascetic teachers like Jerome and John Cassian.¹⁰⁷ As persons in touch with the religious and political aspirations of the lay aristocracy of Ostrogothic Italy, Agapit and Cassiodorus may have had special reasons to prize a work that, unlike most monastic treatises, envisaged both the continuing existence of non-ecclesiastical institutions of higher education and the principled exploitation of secular sources of learning in the service of a biblically based eloquence. Was the *Christian Teaching* already a determining influence in their conception of a Roman academy, c.535? The little that we know or can surmise about that project suggests that it was somehow meant to adjust the Augustinian scheme of a quasi-autonomous biblical culture to the double order of learning (*litterae*) presented by the bibliographies of Jerome and Gennadius.

If this were indeed the case, the genesis of the *Explanation of the Psalms*, traditionally if none too securely dated c.538, would fall at a point when the plan of a Christian school, in the concrete sense of an institution with a library and paid teachers, gave way in the face of new political realities to a more narrowly textual pedagogy in the genre of the published commentary.¹⁰⁸ Another possibility is that the commentary was begun, as the author says in his preface, as an experiment in epitomizing Augustine’s immense compilation of sermons on the Psalms, the so-called *Enarrationes in Psalmos*,¹⁰⁹ and

to the *notae* identifying points from the liberal arts there are others marking features of specifically ‘biblical’ language (*idiomata, id est propriae locutiones divinae legis*) and articles of dogma.

106 O’Donnell, *Cassiodorus*, 158. Halporn, ‘Methods of Reference’, 77, writes of a ‘scheme that will enable the reader to gain an education formerly possible only through a study of... secular texts’.

107 However, for the use made of Augustine’s treatise by Cassiodorus’ contemporary and acquaintance, abbot Eugippius of Lucullanum, see Riché, 130–31. Its early medieval currency: Opelt; Gorman, ‘Diffusion’.

108 Thus Holtz, ‘Quelques aspects’, 283 and n. 16, with reference to Augustine’s *Retractiones* as a further textual-pedagogical model. On Augustine’s *Christian Teaching* as the basis for the programme later adopted for Vivarium, see van de Vyver, ‘Cassiodore et son oeuvre’, 279; Riché, 166–67; O’Donnell, *Cassiodorus*, 205; Barnish, ‘Work of Cassiodorus’, 176; Troncarelli, *Vivarium*, 24–27.

109 *Exp.Ps.* pref. For the use of Augustinian and other sources in this work see O’Donnell, *Cassiodorus*, ch. 5; Walsh, *Cassiodorus: ‘Explanation of the Psalms’*, 1.7f.

that its potential as a ‘textbook in the liberal arts’ emerged later. Questions of date would be decisive, were they soluble. Although there is a broad consensus that the *Explanation of the Psalms* was substantially complete by the late 540s, when Cassiodorus was probably in Constantinople, and that it was revised at Squillace two decades or so later, there is no external evidence for dating successive recensions.¹¹⁰ We have seen that the Psalm commentary opens the list of the author’s works in the preface to the *Orthography*.¹¹¹ On the strength of that reference, it may be said to belong to the Vivarian monastery and be read as a companion to the *Institutions*.¹¹² To say this is not to suppose, however, that any direct road led Cassiodorus from Rome (and Ravenna) to Squillace or that there was seamless continuity between the earliest literary work of his ‘conversion’ and his final testament to his monks. The appearance of such a continuity is partly a trick of our sources. Reading the prefaces to the *Explanation of the Psalms* and the *Institutions*, which both begin with resounding temporal clauses, we obtain no clear sense of how long it has been since the author observed the ‘eager pursuit of secular learning’ in Rome (*Inst.* 1.pref.1) or escaped his ‘secular cares’ in Ravenna (*Exp.Ps.* pref. 1). It is as if the axis of time has somehow ceased to have any extension. This air of timelessness or homeostasis is, we shall see, a characteristic of the textual culture of Vivarium.

To summarize: the *Institutions* in the form in which we now have it is the product of a series of personal experiments begun in the 530s, which in turn drew their inspiration in large part from the earlier initiatives of such authorities as Jerome and Augustine. At no time, it is clear, was Cassiodorus acting entirely alone, and many of his initial instincts were probably shared by a loose coalition of highly educated and well-connected Roman aristocrats,

110 Later additions detectable on internal grounds are bracketed in the edition of M. Adriaen in CCSL 97 and signalled in the notes of Walsh’s translation. As Adriaen remarks, ‘it is likely that these additions are much more numerous [than can now be determined]’. Schlieben (4–10) rightly stresses the uncertainty surrounding the textual history of this work, only to insist without reason on a single early recension addressed to the monks of Vivarium; see *contra* Walsh, *Cassiodorus: ‘Explanation of the Psalms’*, 1.10–11.

111 Above p. 15.

112 Cf. Walsh, *Cassiodorus: ‘Explanation of the Psalms’*, 1.14: ‘[T]he *Institutiones*, with its two books on Christian learning and secular knowledge respectively, can be seen to correspond with the *Expositio Psalmorum* as theory to practice, as a theoretical outline of the discipline of Christian eloquence for which the psalm-commentary serves as the ideal text’. This kind of reading is pursued to the limit by Schlieben. For a caution against interpreting the Psalm commentary too exclusively in the light of the *Institutions* see already Momigliano, ‘Cassiodoro’, 498.

churchmen and civil servants living under Ostrogothic rule. If other and later ventures in Christian education and the organization of Christian texts often bear a family resemblance to the programme of the *Institutions*, that need not by itself be any argument for influence in either direction. Cassiodorus was not the only deviser of such schemes in his time. (The names of some of the others—e.g. Dionysius Exiguus, Eugippius of Lucullanum—have already appeared in the margins of this account, and will do so again.) The collective articulation of a Latin Christian textual culture that had been set in train by the great masters of the later fourth and early fifth centuries had a momentum and visible directions of its own long before Cassiodorus lent his energies and insights to it. If we linger now over the form which his own prescriptions took, it is not because we imagine they could ever have changed the world, or even the small part of it whose future he himself distinctly envisaged. Rather, it is because—despite their many silences and elisions—they are so uniquely redolent of the *new world of texts* in which they were drafted.

Composition and Contents

In the same breath that he recalls the disappointment of his hopes for a Christian academy in Rome (*Inst.* 1.pref.1), Cassiodorus announces the composition of the present ‘introductory books’ (*introductorios libros*), designed to enable readers to grasp both the ‘sequence of Holy Scripture’ and the essence of ‘secular letters’. The plan of Books 1 and 2 of the *Institutions* is then outlined, and a list of section-headings (*tituli*) given for Book 1. Several times in Book 1 Cassiodorus alludes to the accompanying second book. Evidently these ‘introductory books’ are to be conceived as forming a single work. Their unity is emphasized in the preface to Book 2 and again in the general conclusion. In the oldest extant manuscript of the complete work, the eighth-century Bamberg Patr. 61, identified by the siglum **B** in Mynors’ edition of the text, conclusion and *explicit* (‘Here end the two books of Cassiodorus Senator...’) are followed by a statement, copied from an earlier manuscript, that this is ‘the archetype codex according to whose exemplars the rest of the codices are to be corrected’.¹¹³ At the top of the next page appears another direction: ‘Since the two books of the *Institutions* which briefly considered divine and human letters have been assembled, as far as I thought, and carefully treated, it is time that we should now read the edifying

¹¹³ Mynors, x–xii; Troncarelli, *Vivarium*, 30.

rules of the ancients, that is the introductory codex (*codex introductorius*), which serves as a noble and beneficial introduction to sacred letters.’ The reference is to the exegetical guides of Tyconius, Augustine and others, which Cassiodorus imagined forming the next stage, after the *Institutions*, in an ideal course of Christian study (*Inst.* 1.10.1).¹¹⁴ Whatever its exact relationship to a Vivarian original, and despite its textual errors, the Bamberg manuscript can be assumed to transmit important features of Cassiodorus’ overall design for the *Institutions*, including the scheme of illustrations, diagrams and ornaments.¹¹⁵ The very few other manuscripts that contain both books together are either derived from or closely related to it. Structurally and substantially, **B** is the natural model for a modern edition of the Latin text, such as that of Mynors which serves as the basis for the translation published here. In studying the work in this form, we begin to follow the ‘sequence of reading’ envisaged by the author for his monks (1.pref.2).

However, the *Institutions* were not always or even usually read in this form during the Middle Ages.¹¹⁶ From the Carolingian period onwards, the two books were most often to be found separately, that on ‘divine learning’ (Book 1) typically as part of an ensemble of guides to Christian literature that also included the *Famous Men* of Jerome, Gennadius and their continuators, that on ‘secular’ or ‘human learning’ (Book 2) subsumed in larger collections on the liberal arts. The separated versions of Book 1 are all descended from the same exemplar as the complete work in two books; it would appear, then, that the section on ‘divine learning’ was simply detached. The history of the separate versions of Cassiodorus’ treatment of ‘secular’ or ‘human learning’ (Book 2) is more complex, and revelatory not only of the later transmission of the work but also of the circumstances of its composition and initial dissemination.

¹¹⁴ See below pp. 45f.

¹¹⁵ For details of these features, which are intrinsic to Cassiodorus’ original design, see Mynors, xxii–xxiv; Rand, ‘New Cassiodorus’, 435–36, with plates; Troncarelli, ‘Codici’ and *Vivarium*, 67–78, with plates; Nees, 162–66, with plate; and esp. Gorman, ‘Diagrams’, with plates. Gorman’s article opens an important avenue of research. He writes: ‘The design of the *Institutiones*, which includes so many diagrams, marks a new era in the development of the book in the Latin West. The text is no longer composed to be read aloud and listened to, but rather studied and examined by the individual reader directly from the manuscript page... *This was a momentous change in book design and reader habits during the transitional period from late Antiquity to the early Middle Ages*’ (41, emphasis added). Although the present edition makes no pretence at rendering the full graphical scheme of the *Institutions*, it does aim to bring out in other ways the significance of this development in western book culture. See also Cavallo, ‘Between *Volumen* and Codex’, 88–89.

¹¹⁶ On the medieval reception see below pp. 79f.

Excursus: Early drafts and editions of the treatise 'On Secular Learning'

Whereas a few medieval manuscripts contain a separated or detached text of Book 2 of the *Institutions*, others more numerous reproduce two different, heavily interpolated adaptations of a Cassiodorian guide to the liberal arts that appears to have existed separately from Book 1 *from the start*. Manuscripts of this latter kind (a) do not contain the prefatory and concluding material that links the treatment of the liberal arts to the foregoing discussion of divine learning in the two-book *Institutions*,¹¹⁷ but (b) contain other material not found in the 'authentic' Book 2. The significance of these variations has been much discussed by scholars since the appearance of Mynors' edition.¹¹⁸ Following the arguments of Courcelle, it has been generally accepted that the two interpolated forms of the textbook of the liberal arts (distinguished in Mynors' edition by the Greek sigla *phi* and *delta*) resulted from successive revisions of a 'draft' treatise compiled by Cassiodorus before he issued the two-book *Institutions*, a draft that served him as a sketch for Book 2, and that he then retained among his working papers. He himself is supposed to have made corrections and additions to this document—a process of supplementation that was later extended by the Vivarian redactor of the original of the *phi* group of manuscripts and by his successor for the *delta* group.¹¹⁹

The main difficulty with Courcelle's otherwise satisfying reconstruction is that it requires a 'draft' document to remain current, and be copied, after it has been superseded by an authorized text of Book 2 of the *Institutions*. An alternative view, set forth recently by Troncarelli on the basis of a fresh study of the manuscript evidence, seeks to remove this difficulty by treating the *delta* and *phi* recensions not as descendants of a 'draft' for Book 2, but as interpolated versions of successive 'editions' of a textbook of the liberal arts that was compiled and put into circulation by Cassiodorus before the completion—if not before the conception—of the two-book *Institutions*.¹²⁰ This hypothesis entails more than just a redrawing of the diagram of the descent of *Institutions* manuscripts. It turns a large part of what was formerly

117 Following Mynors' practice, these 'omissions' are bracketed in the translation.

118 Mynors, 'Introduction'; Courcelle, 'Histoire d'un brouillon'; Holtz, 'Quelques aspects,' who provides a convenient conspectus of the contents of the variant forms of Book 2.

119 It is the latter, taken for a monk at Vivarium around the turn of the seventh century, who is usually thought to have added the bio-bibliographies contained in the *Ordo generis Cassiodororum*: above n. 28. But see below n. 122 for an alternative hypothesis.

120 Troncarelli, *Vivarium*, 12–21.

considered the textual history of the two-book *Institutions* into the history of a separate ‘Book of Cassiodorus Senator on Human Learning, concerning the Arts and Disciplines of Secular Studies’.¹²¹

According to Troncarelli, the first recoverable ‘edition’ of this guide to the liberal arts was produced some time between 536 and 554—that is, after the death of Agapit and before Cassiodorus’ final return to Squillace. It was intended for a readership of courtly, aristocratic Italians who were opposed to Byzantine rule and whose tastes ran to philosophical-pedagogical texts in elegant formats.¹²² It formed a natural pendant to the Psalm commentary with its apparatus of references to the liberal arts. Together, these two works would provide ‘the cultural and didactic base for the formation of an intellectual elite aligning itself with the directives of the church and the aspirations of a western ruling class which sought to resume its leadership of Italian society and which desired, above all, to contend on an equal footing with Byzantine theologians’.¹²³ Certain features of the underlying text of the *delta* recension, such as a preponderance of Greek terminology and reliance on neo-Platonic ideas (as in the treatise *On the Soul*), can be seen to fit this imagined audience. By contrast, the underlying text of the *phi* recension—which Troncarelli takes to be later—shows an evolution away from the speculative interests of the 530s towards the distinctively Christian textual sciences of Vivarium, with questions of grammar and rhetoric assuming a larger place. The inclusion of a treatise (not by Cassiodorus) on the calculation of the date of Easter down to the year 562 has been taken to provide a *terminus post quem* for this form of the text. By that time, Troncarelli argues, Cassiodorus’ pedagogical projects would have been firmly focused on his Calabrian monastery.¹²⁴ By then, too, he would have been at work on a draft of the introduction to ‘divine letters’ that was to become Book 1 of the *Institutions*.¹²⁵

121 Thus the title in the *delta* recension (Mynors xxxvi), taken by Troncarelli—against the prior consensus—for the earlier of the two. Regrettably, Troncarelli persists in referring to this treatise as a recension of ‘the *Institutions*’, as if it were always part of a larger work, making his argument harder to follow than it ought to be.

122 A political context is inferred by Troncarelli from the presence of the *Order of the House of the Cassiodori* in some manuscripts of the *delta* recension, a text derived from a work addressed to Cethegus, one of the leading western exiles in Constantinople c.550: above n. 45.

123 Troncarelli, *Vivarium*, 15.

124 *Ibid.* 19–21, following Lehmann, 51, against Courcelle, ‘Histoire d’un brouillon’, 73, on the date.

125 In revising his manual of the liberal arts for the *Institutions*, Cassiodorus apparently produced a fresh draft which, as well as serving as the basis for the archetype of the two-book

While the composition history of Cassiodorus' manual of the liberal arts may never be exactly established, the researches of Courcelle and Troncarelli have at least made it plain that the text was successively re-elaborated over several decades with different readerships in view. This fact may influence our own approach to the work. At least two styles of reading are possible:

The first respects what we may take to be the author's *final* intentions. Coming to Book 2 of the *Institutions* after Book 1, reading through the square brackets in Mynors' edition and the main text of this translation as if they were not there, and confining ourselves to the *right-hand* column of the translation where it divides, we assume the position of a member of the Vivarian monastery towards the end of its founder's life, for whom this summary of 'classical' learning was meant to serve as a valuable if not indispensable adjunct to a course of religious study. *Inst.* 1–2, on this reading, forms part of a larger 'introduction' to Christian textual science.

We can also attempt another reading, no less faithful to Cassiodorus but of a historically prior kind. Setting aside Book 1 in favour of the *Explanation of the Psalms*, omitting the material in curly brackets ({}) in this translation of Book 2, and keeping to the *left-hand* column where the text divides, we can begin to explore the possibilities for a new theoretical and practical synthesis between the higher learning of the late Graeco-Roman world and the imaginative riches of Christian Scripture as lately discovered to Latin readers by Augustine, Jerome and others. That may have been the experiment made by Cassiodorus himself between the mid-530s and early 550s, with the support of a few other persons of rank and education in Rome, Ravenna and Constantinople.¹²⁶ Out of it, in the course of time, came the work we know as the *Institutions of Divine and Secular Learning*.

work as we now have it, also gave rise to a third (interpolated) form of the separate treatise, attested in citations by Isidore of Seville and Paul the Deacon: Holtz, 'Quelques aspects', 286–89; Troncarelli, *Vivarium*, 30–31 (with a different interpretation of the evidence).

126 Note especially the concluding sentence of the main body of the treatise 'On Secular Learning' (= *Inst.* 2.7.4): 'However, it will be sufficient for us to know as much of this art [viz. Astronomy] as Holy Scripture contains' (thus in *delta*). The *phi* recension adds: '... because it is quite unfitting to follow human reason in this matter on which we know and have as much divine teaching as is useful to us'. This restriction already suggests a movement away from the philosophical eclecticism of the *De anima*, in keeping with the main tendency of the works of Cassiodorus' 'conversion', which is to subordinate secular to biblical learning. Even if we posit a non-Vivarian readership for the earliest (recoverable) redaction of the treatise 'On Secular Learning', that readership is already envisaged as *monastic* (e.g. *Inst.* 2.2.16). Cf. Barnish, 'Work of Cassiodorus', 162, for the hypothesis of a multiple audience for *Exp.Ps.*

How early Cassiodorus conceived the plan of the two-book *Institutions* as a whole, or began to draft what is now its first book, we can only conjecture. If the manual ‘On Secular Learning’ is recognized as a separately issued work rather than as a draft of *Inst.* 2, for the reasons suggested above, then its early states and possible dates can no longer be used, as they often have been by scholars in the past, to mark the putative progress of the complete *Institutions*. For the two-book work as a whole, and Book 1 as a part of it, our manuscript evidence refers exclusively to the more or less definitive redaction produced by Cassiodorus and his collaborators near the end of his life—that is, in the 580s.¹²⁷ There is no reason to think, however, either that the idea of a unified work ‘On Divine and Secular Learning’ was a belated decision or that the book ‘On Divine Learning’ was thrown together at the eleventh hour. While the progression from the *Explanation of the Psalms* to the two-book *Institutions* may not have been quite as assured as the retrospective catalogue of the *Orthography* makes it appear, there are many signs that the second of these works was carefully premeditated and prepared over a long period. The absence of any external trace of prior redactions of Book 1 is evidence only that no separate Cassiodorian manual ‘On Divine Learning’ was ever produced in a form intended to circulate; internal traces of successive drafts are not lacking, and confirm what we might in any case expect, namely that Cassiodorus’ Christian pedagogy kept evolving with his experience, and through his contact with newly obtained texts.¹²⁸

*Book 1: The Bible and Christian Authors*¹²⁹

• preface

Order (or ‘arrangement’) is the keynote of the *Institutions*. Several kinds of order are announced, if not always clearly separable. Most obviously, there is the order of the work in hand, *instituti operis ordo* (1.pref.10), set out at length in the preface to Book 1 and frequently recapitulated thereafter, often with interesting variations of emphasis. The primary division (1.pref.5–6) is

127 See the discussions by Holtz and Troncarelli cited above n. 125. The latter argues for the existence of ‘two or three codicological models... for a tradition which, however, presents itself as substantially unified from the point of view of the text’ (31).

128 Van de Vyver, ‘*Les Institutions*’; Holtz, ‘*Quelques aspects*’, 284; Troncarelli, *Vivarium*, 29.

129 For a schematic table of the contents of Book 1 see below p. 63. Note that the chapter numbers used here and in the translation have been supplied by modern editors and do not appear in the manuscripts: Gorman, ‘*Diagrams*’, 28.

between Book 1, said to present the Christian ‘teachers of a former age’, and Book 2, which is to contain a summary of ‘the arts and disciplines of liberal studies’. We should note, however, that the latter book is in a sense already taken as read: it will be an advantage, says Cassiodorus, if one has ‘prior acquaintance’ with its contents when embarking on the scriptural studies outlined in Book 1, since (according to the theory of cultural ‘transfer’ discussed above, pp. 29ff) the secular disciplines usefully systematize elements of divine wisdom (1.pref.6). Despite this provision—which may reflect the prior publishing reality of an independent treatise ‘On Secular Learning’, now to be incorporated in a larger whole—Book 1 appears most of the time to envisage an exclusively Christian course of readings; it is in that connection that Cassiodorus first speaks of the ‘order of reading’ (1.pref.2; cf. 1.pref.5). As initially outlined, this *ordo lectionis* represents a deft blending of monastic spirituality, akin to that informing the nearly contemporary *Rule* of Benedict of Nursia, with a more intellectually ambitious syllabus inspired by the writings of the late fourth- and early fifth-century (Greek and) Latin Fathers.¹³⁰

As generally in the monastic tradition, the novice begins with the Psalms. ‘Regular reading’ (1.pref.3) of those most salutary texts is the foundation for all that comes later. We shall be reminded (1.4.1) that this had been Cassiodorus’ own way in the *Explanation of the Psalms*, ‘the first labour in the time of [his] conversion’ (*Orth.*, pref.; cf. *Exp.Ps.* pref.16, referring to *Inst.*). Other monastic writers routinely associate Bible reading or ‘divine study’ (*divina lectio* [1.pref.3]) with the liturgy of the hours. That reference is missing here in the *Institutions*.¹³¹ Instead, Cassiodorus straightaway insists on the importance of having accurate texts available for these preliminary exercises (1.pref.2). It is a characteristic stipulation. In his book or ‘Rule’, the ideal order of reading assumes a prior or simultaneous order of correct writing. It is clear already from the preface that the *Institutions* is, in a fundamental sense, to be a treatise in orthography (1.pref.9).

130 For the scholarly debate on relations between the Benedictine and Cassiodorian monastic programmes see below pp. 83ff. Benedict is nowhere mentioned in Cassiodorus’ writings, nor is there any reason to think that he referred to his *Rule*. However, the two founders of monasteries were drawing largely on the same traditions of Christian thought and spirituality and upon similar material and social resources in sixth-century Italy: see esp. Pricoco, ‘Aspetti culturali’ and ‘Spiritualità monastica’. The account given of Benedict’s *Rule* by Leyser, 101–28, could usefully be read in parallel with *Inst.* 1.

131 Though see *Inst.* 2.2.16 on psalmody.

Cassiodorus was the first, it seems, to interpret the biblical story of Jacob's ladder as an allegory of the mind's (or soul's) ascent to the contemplation of God, identified with wisdom (1.pref.2; cf. 1.24.3; 1.28.3-4: *sapientia*).¹³² Augustine had favoured such analogies, but never placed Bible study higher than the third rung of a seven-rung ladder.¹³³ Augustine's Gallic contemporary, the great monastic teacher John Cassian, had assimilated the activity of biblical exegesis more closely to the 'spiritual science' of contemplation, but only after insisting on the 'practical science' of ascetic living as a prerequisite.¹³⁴ Cassian and Augustine are Cassiodorus' chief guides for the preface to Book 1, and he is careful to have them speak with one voice (e.g., most explicitly, at 1.pref.7). The voice, however, is his own. Cassiodorus downplays the ethical demands of Cassian's teaching (1.pref.2: '...happy is the mind...'; 1.29.2: reminder of the eight principal sins) and recasts his 'spiritual science' to fit the method of Augustine's *Christian Teaching*. Conversely, he submits the Augustinian ideal of *doctrina christiana* or 'Christian culture' to a scribal and bibliographical regime unimaginable to that father. Jerome, too, is a vivid presence from the beginning to the end of Book 1 of the *Institutions*, as exemplary for his attention to the practicalities of textual format (1.pref.9, etc.) as for his prodigious work as a biblical translator and commentator (1.21 and *passim*). The study of the Bible in carefully corrected texts, and in conjunction with the published exegesis of orthodox teachers of former times, is now the stairway to heaven (cf. 1.16.2). Scripture itself already shines with a celestial light (1.pref.8; cf. 1.33.1). The purpose of the *Institutions* is to show the reader the way to full enjoyment of that light. Hence these are 'introductory books' in a rather exalted sense; the one who follows their method to the letter will be able in his turn to 'introduce' others, perhaps less literate than himself, to the same mysteries (1.15.1; 1.32.3).

- 1.1–9, 10, 11: Bible with commentary and 'introductions'; accepted church councils

A possible inference from *Inst.* 1.pref.3 is that the student or novice monk, once familiar with the Psalms and perhaps a few other biblical texts, will turn next to the *Institutions* and, having taken his bearings from the preface and table of chapter-headings (*tituli*), launch into the 'textual sequence

¹³² Pricoco, 'Spiritualità monastica', 366–68. Cf. *Regula Benedicti* 7 for a different allegorization.

¹³³ Augustine, *Doct.chr.* 2.7.10.

¹³⁴ Cassian, *Conlationes* 14, with Markus, *End of Ancient Christianity*, ch.12.

(*series*) of Holy Scripture' (1.pref.1) with the book of Genesis (1.1.1). Here again, however, we must recognize that the *textual* sequence (*ordo* or *series*) of Cassiodorus' handbook is only one of several principles of arrangement within the imagined universe of the *Institutions* and its ancillary works. Augustine had recommended basic familiarity with the whole biblical canon as a preliminary to more detailed exegesis (*Doct.chr.* 2.8.12-13), and in the story of his *Confessions* seemed to make a natural beginning with 'In the beginning...' (11.3.5). Cassiodorus likewise keeps the whole of Scripture constantly in mind and his preferred term for its totality, *auctoritas divina* (literally 'the divine authority'), is perfectly Augustinian. But, as he pertinently remarks, *his* ideal Scripture is already enveloped by an exegetical apparatus, the combined work of many previous Christian interpreters (*expositores, tractatores*), to a degree that Augustine's could not have been two centuries earlier, when *Latin* exegesis of the Bible, in particular, was still relatively undeveloped (thus *Inst.* 1.21.2, referring to Jerome). Those earlier exegetes had opened broad avenues into certain areas of the canon and it is no accident that Cassiodorus' choice of 'primary' sites for study—the Psalter, the Prophets, and the Apostolic Epistles (1.pref.8)—broadly reflects the prior distribution of (Latin) commentary. Whereas Augustine could only advise using the plainer parts of Scripture to interpret the more obscure (e.g. *Doct.chr.* 2.6.8; cf. *Inst.* 1.pref.2), Cassiodorus' policy is now to work outwards from the parts of Scripture that had already been well commented upon to those less frequented. This means, in practice, that the order in which one studies the various books of the Bible will be influenced by the relative density of existing interpretations of them, and, more generally, that such study will entail a constant to-and-fro between text and commentary. Not coincidentally, the lexical pair of *textus* and *commentum* achieves a prominence in the *Institutions* that is new to Latin literature.¹³⁵

The logic of this new-style, Cassiodorian textual regime is most clearly set out at *Inst.* 1.10, the chapter following the opening series on the contents of the Bible from Genesis to Revelation (1.1–9). The title, 'The Types of Understanding' (*De modis intellegentiae*), would in other contexts denote a summary of the ways of interpreting biblical passages, as provided by Tyconius and others duly mentioned at this point.¹³⁶ (For Cassiodorus' nearest approaches to such a hermeneutical digest, see 1.16.2—a slight expansion of

135 On the general trajectory of Latin biblical exegesis in late antiquity and the early Middle Ages, see Stansbury—an important article for the study of Cassiodorus.

136 Reception of Tyconius, *Liber regularum* from Augustine to Cassiodorus to Isidore: Cazier.

Augustinian norms—and 1.24.) In fact, what Cassiodorus presents here is a summary of his own practice as a compiler, not so much a hermeneutical guide as a prospectus for the elaboration of a ‘total’ exegesis of Scripture. Inevitably this statement of principle turns back on the *Institutions* themselves, which are the expression-in-progress of just such a programme. Grammatical transparency is an early casualty: ‘After reading this work (*post huius operis instituta*), our first concern should be to consider [or reconsider: *sollicita mente redeamus*] the introductory manuals to Divine Scripture that I [or we?] have previously found (*quae postea reperimus*)...’ (1.10.1). In other words, after perusing Cassiodorus’ ‘introduction’ (i.e. *Inst.* 1[–2] or possibly just *Inst.* 1.1–9), the ideal reader will (re)turn to the ‘introductory books’ that Cassiodorus has gathered—or that such a reader, now following Cassiodorus’ instructions, has gathered for himself.¹³⁷

The continuing student of Scripture, finding himself in a situation similar to the one we might reconstruct for Cassiodorus himself in the 530s,¹³⁸ will thus turn first (after *Inst.*) to the other introductory works of Tyconius, Augustine and Junilius (Junillus); then to the commentators (*expositores*) on individual books, as now conveniently catalogued in *Inst.* 1.1–9; and in third (or fourth) place to ‘the orthodox teachers who have solved the most difficult problems by systematic reasoning’ (1.10.1–3; for the numbering of paragraphs, see note on the text).

Breaking the list here, we can mark another feature of Cassiodorus’ theological culture. Although the precise reference of the ‘most difficult problems’ said to be solved by the ‘orthodox teachers’ is unclear, it is likely that he has in mind questions in the interpretation of Scripture taken up in the course of doctrinal controversy or in more speculative works of dogmatic theology. Unlike most of the Greek and Latin masters of the fourth and early fifth century upon whom he relies, and some of his contemporaries, Cassiodorus appears not to have been much engaged, intellectually, by the great debates on the Trinity, the Incarnation (christology), or Grace and Free

¹³⁷ For the more extended sense of the phrase ‘introductory books’ see the instruction in MS B cited above p. 38. Elsewhere in the present chapter, the first-person plural pronoun refers to Cassiodorus plus his readers. But he is not everywhere perfectly consistent in this regard. At 1.21.2 he will praise Jerome’s Letter 53 to Paulinus of Nola as an excellent introduction to the books of the Bible, adding: ‘If I had found this earlier (*quem si ante reperissem*), I would perhaps have yielded to his eloquence and been content to say nothing on the same material’ (1.21.2). The phrasing is very close to that of 1.10.1 and is a reminder that the *ordo lectionis* of the *Institutions* emerges from a serially (re)written transcript of the author’s own readings of half a lifetime; see further below pp. 58–59.

¹³⁸ For his own progress in *lectio divina* in that period see *Var.* IX.25.11 (dated 533).

Will. By and large, he held, these issues could now be considered satisfactorily resolved. All that remained to do was to see that the orthodox creed was followed, and that those who strayed from it, whether living persons like Eusebius, the blind but otherwise visionary Novatianist (1.5.2), or writers long dead (1.1.8: Origen; 1.8.1: Pelagius; 1.9.3: Tyconius; 1.29.2: Cassian), were ‘corrected.’¹³⁹ While other sixth-century compilers are prodigal with summaries of the faith, Cassiodorus is content to append a short notice on the decrees of four ‘universal’ councils (1.11; for the *Codex Encyclius* see also 1.23.4) at the end of his initial introduction to the biblical writings.¹⁴⁰ He offers no statement of the content of the conciliar decisions *de fide*, and never refers back to this chapter in any of his subsequent recapitulations (beginning already at 1.11.3). Later, in a peroration on ‘The Excellence of Divine Scripture’, he finds space for a brief eulogy of the Holy Trinity, with references to major Latin works ‘On the Faith’ (1.16.2); a further, somewhat miscellaneous paragraph then collects works said to be useful for instruction in the *ecclesiastica disciplina* or the ‘rule of the church’ (1.16.3; cf. 1.11.1: *regulas ecclesiasticas*). We should not conclude that Cassiodorus did not prize these works, among which are Augustine’s *On the Trinity*, *City of God* and *Retractationes*. Their genres, however, placed them outside the main orbit of the *Institutions*, which has the canonical Scripture as its sun.

Even if some doubt remains about the nature of the books referred to at 1.10.3, the treatment proposed for works referred to in ‘fifth’ place (or ‘fourth’ after the *Institutions*) in the chapter on ‘The Types of Understanding’ makes Cassiodorus’ basic method sufficiently clear. Wherever the fathers refer to texts of Scripture *exempli causa* in the course of their (otherwise) *non-exegetical* writings, the passage is to be ‘noted’. The use to be made of such *notae*—critical marks placed in the margins of books read through for the purpose—is more fully explained in later chapters. Cassiodorus’ practice, on finding a passage of biblical exegesis in some work or another of the fathers, was to signal it with an abbreviation for the relevant division of the

139 This practice of dogmatic ‘correction’ is attested in some presumably Vivarian manuscripts by the use of the obelus, a critical sign employed by Hellenistic and later critics to mark spurious passages in the works of the classical poets: Troncarelli, *Vivarium*, 60–61. Origen had applied similar techniques in his collation of the Septuagint; their extension to Christian theological texts was envisaged by Jerome (Vessey, ‘Forging of Orthodoxy’, 510–11) but Cassiodorus seems to have been the first to implement it.

140 On the deliberate omission of the ‘fifth’ ecumenical council (Constantinople II of 553, which condemned the Three Chapters), see Barnish, ‘Work of Cassiodorus’, 164.

Scriptures (according to the nine-part scheme of *Inst.* 1.1-9), written in red ink in the margin (1.26). To make it easy for later readers to interpret these marks, he also wrote a key to them at the beginning of every manuscript thus treated. (This is also the device, we recall, that he adopts for signalling references to the liberal arts in his *Explanation of the Psalms*. References to idioms particular to the language of the Bible are marked with the same signs in both contexts.) Cassiodorus' pen-in-hand readings have been curtailed by age, he says. If extended, however, the Bible-indexing of the Fathers that he practised could lead to the creation of a new kind of commentary, at once 'incisive and beautiful' (1.26.2). As an example for imitation, Cassiodorus cites his own compilation of a partial commentary on the books of Kings (1.15.14), a section of the Bible hitherto largely bare of continuous exegesis but for which a covering 'garment' could be stitched together out of patches from different authors (1.2.1). The idea had a brilliant future. Carried to its natural conclusion a few centuries later, the *reductio ad Scripturam* of patristic literature would produce the *Glossa ordinaria*.¹⁴¹ Meanwhile, the readers envisaged by Cassiodorus will be able to 'commune' (*colloqui*) on Scripture with the fathers as often as their texts afford them an opportunity (1.17.3). The chapter on 'The Types of [Scriptural] Understanding' ends by recommending 'frequent discussion (*collocutio*) with learned elders', a prescription entirely in the spirit of Cassian and which echoes in every monastic rule from his time onwards. Doubtless such oral conferences also occurred at Vivarium. It is the deliberateness of their provision for *textual conference*, however, that distinguishes the *Institutions* from most other documents of late ancient and early medieval monastic culture in the West.¹⁴²

If we take chapter 10 to register an early reflexive moment in the elaboration of what is now *Inst.* 1, it may next be possible to make out the shape of another emergent whole or putative 'draft', encompassing the biblical repertory of chapters 1-9 and its sequels down to chapter 24. But first there is an interpretative crux to be addressed.

141 The digesting of Augustine's works in the order of the biblical canon in Eugippius' *Excerpta ex operibus S. Augustini* (CPL 676) obeys the same principle: O'Donnell, 'Authority of Augustine', 18-19. For the genesis of the *Glossa ordinaria* see Matter.

142 Cf. Stansbury, 50: 'the program that Cassiodorus created in the sixth century for his monks at Vivarium is a turning point [in western literate culture] because it is a systematic attempt to make texts explain texts'. Similarly, Halporn, 'Methods of Reference', presents the *Exp.Ps.* as 'a new type of book, the first self-help manual for independent study' (87).

Excursus: The meaning of the term codex as used by Cassiodorus

At 1.11.3, looking back over the previous chapters, Cassiodorus speaks of having gathered together ‘the Holy Scripture in nine *codices* together with the introductory writers and... almost all Latin commentators’ (1.11.3). The word he uses for the action is *collegimus* (‘we [I] have collected [these works]’). The nature of the unity-and-totality entailed by this particular instance of the verb *con-legere* may not be quite as simple as it appears at first reading. For it seems, curiously, to lie somewhere between the virtual and the physical.

The obvious sense of Cassiodorus’ claim, or at least the easiest to grasp, is that the works in question—biblical, exegetical, and introductory—have been assembled (by title) in the catalogue of his *Institutions*, as indeed they have. The unity is thus primarily a conceptual one. This interpretation is borne out by a closely parallel passage at 1.15.16 where, instead of *collegimus*, we find *memoravimus* (‘we [I] have detailed [these works]’). Further support for it can be adduced from Cassiodorus’ apparent willingness to use the Latin word for a spine-hinged book (*codex*) in the abstract sense of a ‘class’ or division of subject matter. This he may be thought to have done in calling his nine main divisions of the biblical canon *codices*, a word which (in this context only) has been rendered as ‘sections’ in the present translation.¹⁴³ For example: ‘The first section (*codex*) of Divine Scripture is the Octateuch...’ (1.1.1); ‘The ninth section (*codex*) is known to contain the Acts of the Apostles and the Apocalypse’ (1.9.1). These divisions, it can be argued, do not manifestly correspond to those of any actual multi-volume copy of the Bible known to Cassiodorus; rather, they are conceptual unities, designed to facilitate the cataloguing process of the *Institutions*. There is therefore no reason to construe the *collegimus* of 1.10.1 in a material sense, as if nine physical *codices* (i.e. bound books) could possibly expand to contain the works of all the commentators on the Bible listed by Cassiodorus, along with the biblical texts themselves, to say nothing of the introductory writers. It is clear, in fact, that works of exegesis and other kinds of Christian scholarship were *not* bound up with the Scriptures at Vivarium. A Vivarian copy of a scriptural text, we understand, would usually be equipped with chapter headings (*tituli*), either as transmitted in the ‘ancient’ versions or newly supplied. It might also contain marginal annotations, sometimes

¹⁴³ The present discussion begins from Halporn, ‘Cassiodorus’ Use of the Term Codex’. See also Witty.

inscribed in the shape of bunches of grapes (1.3.1: *botrionum formulae*), and carefully inserted emendations. The compilation-*codices* of commentary, of which Cassiodorus speaks (1.2.12, 5.4, 8.12), were separate physical entities, which he is nonetheless at great pains to coordinate with the corresponding parts of the Bible; hence the ‘collective’ bibliography of *Inst.* 1–9.

It is useful to insist on the notional or virtual quality of the Christian library assembled in the *Institutions*, as well as instructive to consider how, for someone like Cassiodorus, the still relatively new technology of the spine-hinged book or *codex*—as opposed to the *volumina* or rolls customarily used for ‘classical’ literary works until the fourth century AD—might lend itself to a conceptualization of the Bible-centred universe of Christian texts that was ultimately *unconfined* by the physical limits of that technology.¹⁴⁴ It is likely that Cassiodorus’ ideas of (biblical) *codex* and *codices* represent an important stage in the evolution of the perceived and imagined relations between ‘text’ and ‘book’ in western culture.¹⁴⁵ These are topics inviting further research. All of which granted, we should not be too eager to spirit away the material reality of the Vivarian biblical ‘collection’.

Is it certain that Cassiodorus’ *novem codices* had no physical existence? Many previous readers of the *Institutions* have taken them for real, and it may in the end prove easier to allow them a measure of library reality than to make them vanish altogether. When Cassiodorus speaks of ‘read[ing] over carefully all nine *codices* containing the divine authority... [and] collating [the text] against [that in] older books (*priscorum codicum*) as my friends read aloud to me from these’ (1.pref.8), the natural inference would seem to

144 On this technology of the *codex* and the shifts in reading practice associated with it, see now Cavallo, ‘Between *Volumen* and *Codex*’, with references to earlier scholarship; Bertelli, 49ff.

145 See Petrucci, *Writers and Readers*, 15–16 (in an essay entitled ‘From Unitary Book to Miscellany’) and 19ff. (‘The Christian Conception of the Book in the Sixth and Seventh Centuries’). Cassiodorus provides our first instances of the use of the word *pandectes* in a Latin context to describe a single-volume copy of the Bible (*Inst.* 1.5.2, 12.3, 14.4, 15.11; cf. *Exp.Ps.* 86, line 42). As noted above (p. 9), the term had earlier currency for comprehensive one-volume collections of Roman legal texts. Similarly, the great compendia of imperial laws associated with Theodosius II and Justinian, the *Codex Theodosianus* and *Codex Iustinianus*, were titled equally after the emperor who commissioned them and the physical container that made them possible. (This use of the term *codex* for legal collections can be traced as early as the end of the third century: Liebs, ‘Recht und Rechtsliteratur’, 60–63, on the Diocletianic *Codex Gregorianus* and *Codex Hermogenianus*.) De Hamel, 34 speaks of the *Codex Amiatinus*, whose format is widely thought to have imitated that of the Vivarian *codex grandior* (*Inst.* 1.14.2), as ‘mark[ing] a turning-point... in the abstract concept of the Bible as a unity’. See also Nees, underlining the rarity of one-volume bibles before the ninth century in the West; Petitmengin, ‘*Codex Amiatinus*’, 73.

be that he is working with a copy of the Bible in nine physical parts. The further assumption that this is as ‘reference’ copy, assembled by Cassiodorus over the years, is not contradicted by anything else we know.

There is also the matter of explaining why the ‘ideal’ order in which Cassiodorus begins to list the main sections of the Bible (1. Octateuch, 2. Kings, 3. Prophets, 4. Psalter, 5. Salomon) is at odds with the numbering of his first five *codices* (viz. 1. Octateuch, 2. Kings, 3. Psalter, 4. Solomon, 5. Prophets), which is that of the Septuagint (cf. 1.14.1). If the *novem codices* were a purely conceptual entity, why did he not simply (re)conceive them in the order of the bibliography, sparing readers the puzzlement we now experience at 1.3–5? If, on the contrary, the *novem codices* were bound books in a bookcase—or in a series of bookcases which also contained the corresponding volumes of commentary—then his readers at Vivarium would already know where to find them, and their convenience would be paramount. (There remains the question of why Cassiodorus followed this particular sectioning of the Bible, but that is a problem in any case; denying the physical reality of the *novem codices* creates a second.)

Finally, if the *novem codices* were an imaginary device, we might wonder why the numerologically sensitive Cassiodorus did not either make something of the number nine (cf. his conceits on the total number of biblical books at 1.12.2, 13.2, 14.4) or reorder things to yield a more mystically appealing figure.

All things considered, our wisest course may be to allow that the nine ‘sections’ of Cassiodorus’ Bible could in fact have answered to nine physical books in the Vivarian library, even if we can never be certain what version(s) of the biblical text each contained.

There is more than an intermittent problem of translation involved here. The difficulty of maintaining a distinction between the Bible as an ideal totality and the material parts and wholes of the physical book(s) in which that ideal was variously realized is the key instance of a larger dilemma for modern readers of the *Institutions*. Repeatedly our attention splits between the possibility (1) of reconstructing a ‘real’ sixth-century Christian library, into which the literary oeuvre of Cassiodorus’ later life offers fascinating glimpses (e.g. *armarium octavum*, ‘the eighth bookcase’ containing Greek books [1.14.4]),¹⁴⁶ and (2) that of reconceiving the suprapersonal, almost transcendent order of writing and of the ultimately singular Book-as-Scripture towards which he beckons in the preface to the *Orthography*. For

146 Thus Teutsch, 232.

an illustration of this dilemma we could turn again to the image of Ezra in the Codex Amiatinus, where the array of nine physical codices in a single *armarium* and the activity of the scribe-corrector in the foreground may be understood both as a symbol of the perfect unity of the Christian revelation and as an indicator of the kind of practical arrangements that were made to ensure its transmission in early medieval Europe.¹⁴⁷ (See further below: divisions of the Bible.)

There is, it would seem, a necessary and sustaining tension at the heart of Cassiodorus' ideology of the book. And that tension would be heightened in his case by a concern which not all modern readers are bound to share: that all the dispositions of books, whether conceptual or material, that he made for his Latin-reading monks in one corner of the Italian peninsula be also visibly part of a universal or 'Catholic' order of Christianity.

- 12–14: divisions of the Bible

Where the fathers of the church councils sought to compass such an order in short credal statements (*symbola, canones*), Cassiodorus finds it in a short canon of canons of Scripture. From his choice of 'Four Accepted Councils', tacked on at the end of the catalogue of commentators and introductory writers, he proceeds directly to three 'accepted divisions' of the biblical books. Although the arrangements differ, he asserts, '[t]he church of all regions (*universarum regionum*) accepts this [divine] law... in a respectful and harmonious way' (1.11.3). The same emphasis on translocal harmony (*concordia*) returns more strongly in the paragraph devoted to 'variations' in the Septuagint. *Non contraria dixerint sed diversa*, 'they [the fathers] have said things not contradictory... but only different' (1.14.3), a sentiment that also appears in the inscription from the Caelian library at Rome,¹⁴⁸ is Cassiodorus' piously pragmatic response to the problem of textual variation in the expression of supposedly unitary doctrine. It is his rationale for the array of carefully corrected and diversely formatted Bible texts that he bequeaths his monks: compact single-volume edition (*pandectes*) of Jerome's 'Vulgate' as it was later to be called (1.12.3); larger single-volume edition (*codex grandior*) including Jerome's (incomplete) pre-Vulgate revision of the Septuagint, based on Origen's six-columned or hexaplaric collation of the Hebrew text with a series of parallel translations (1.14.2); 'reference' edition

147 Marsden, 'Job in his Place'; above pp. 7f.

148 Above n. 26.

(with Old Latin? hexaplaric? text) in nine volumes or ‘sections’.¹⁴⁹ Cassiodorus’ matter-of-fact manner could mislead at this distance, yet there is nothing routine or predictable about his approach to the textual tradition of the (Latin) Bible. Augustine had believed in the providential validity of the *textus receptus*, trusting that God would not allow a generally erroneous version of his Scriptures to circulate widely to the general confusion of the faithful.¹⁵⁰ Jerome had returned stridently to the Greek and Hebrew ‘originals’ in pursuit of a single, definitive Latin version, and would one day be honoured as a precursor of modern text-critical method.¹⁵¹ Cassiodorus takes his own way, which is at once critical, eclectic and orthodox. His, we might say, was the first ‘comparative’ text (or Text) of the Latin Bible, a work accessible in variant states or forms, each the result of philological labour, all radiating the same, indivisible divine light.

- 1.15–24: correction of the biblical text; excellence of the Bible; other resources

The chapters on divisions of the canon (1.12–14) can be seen as forming a bridge between the ‘introductory’ section (1.1–10, 11), descended perhaps from notes kept by the author from the time of his own initiation as a Scripture-scholar, and the lesson on ‘How Carefully the Text of Holy Scripture Ought to be Corrected’ (1.15). This begins precisely at the mid-point of the treatise ‘On Divine Learning’, is easily the longest chapter in the book, and is in many respects its core. In contrast to Book 2, which offers a practical digest of traditional teaching, most of Book 1 is in the nature of orientation: the reader will henceforth know where to look for help, or what to look for, but he will not learn much of substance that he did not already know. One reason for the length of chapter 15 is that it is a partial exception to this rule; here Cassiodorus is giving instructions. From time to time in the previous chapters he drops hints about jobs needing to be done, but the accent is mainly on stocktaking and survey. Now he has a long-term task in

149 After the pioneering work of Fischer on the texts of Cassiodorus’ bibles (now in his *Lateinische Bibelhandschriften*, 9–34, 66–69) see Loewe, 115–20; Halporn, ‘Pandectes’, 296–97; Gribomont; Gibson, *Bible in the Latin West*, 3–4; de Hamel, 32–34; for the possible relation of his *codex grandior* to the Codex Amiatinus, esp. Marsden, *Text of the Old Testament*, 129–39; Meyvaert, ‘Bede, Cassiodorus’.

150 E.g. *Doct.chr.* 2.15.22, and in his correspondence with Jerome: Hennings, 110–15. For orientation see the articles ‘Bible’ by O’Donnell and ‘Hermeneutical Presuppositions’ by Pollmann in *Augustine through the Ages*, ed. Fitzgerald; Kamesar, ‘The Bible Comes to the West’.

151 Sparkes; Kamesar, *Jerome, Greek Scholarship, and the Hebrew Bible*.

view for a particular group of his collaborators, those who, ‘hav[ing] a good knowledge of divine *and secular letters*’ (1.15.1), are capable of emending the text of Scripture in miscellaneous copies, thereby saving their less literate brethren from error.

1.15 thus already assumes a knowledge of Book 2, or equivalent education. In addition, it contains (1.15.10) a cross-reference to the treatment of orthography at 1.30.2 and a reference to the separate digest *On Orthography*; its listing of the distinctive turns of phrase and other linguistic particularities of Scripture (*idiomata, propriae locutiones*) is a compressed version of one aspect of the extended pedagogy of the *Explanation of the Psalms*; and, for the determination of the true biblical reading in cases of doubt, it sends the corrector back to Jerome’s hexaplaric Old Testament, his Vulgate, or the Greek pandect in ‘the eighth bookcase’ — that is, to the bibliographic resources detailed in 1.12–14. In short, the activity of the biblical text-checker outlined in this chapter draws on the panoply of resources laid up elsewhere by Cassiodorus for his monks. The correction of copies of the Bible was not the only task he envisaged for these skilled individuals; also mentioned here are the checking of patristic texts and excerpting of exegetical passages (1.15.14). But it is clearly the central activity. ‘This kind of correction,’ he writes, ‘is, in my opinion, the most beautiful and glorious task of learned men’ (1.15.1). The spirit of exultation in fine, accurate and salutary scribal-editorial work will rise higher in the pendant chapter on ‘Scribes and Advice on Proper Spelling’ (1.30), but Cassiodorus the former imperial panegyrist is already fingering the rhetorical organ-stops. It is a nice coincidence (if that is all it is) that his zeal for dialectical division culminates (1.15.8) at the instant he needs to ensure that the biblical text remain a single, perfect garment like Christ’s tunic (1.15.11).

The opening two paragraphs of 1.16 (‘The Excellence of Divine Scripture’) lead swiftly to a rhetorical climax: ... *quot verba, tot praemia; quot sententiae, totidem ultiones! nihil vacat ab utili doctrina, nisi cum silet lingua magnalia. O si nunquam cessaretur a talibus!* (‘[Scripture has] as many rewards as there are words; as many punishments as there are sentences. Useful teaching does not fail, unless the tongue fails to speak of mighty things. O, if the tongue would never cease from such teachings!’ [1.16.2]). This is the pitch to which Cassiodorus’ oration in praise of divine letters has been gathering since the first stately period of the preface; from here it will roll down slowly to its conclusion, rising again for a moment at 1.30.1 and once more in the closing prayer (1.33). The object of praise is eloquence itself, the eloquence—or effulgence—of Scripture. It is to

preserve the power of Scripture to infuse and irradiate human minds that the orthographic and other skills of the scribe are needed, so that the ‘arrangement of words’ (*ordo dictorum*) of the divine text is not disturbed. We recall that Agapit and Cassiodorus had hoped to provide teachers to assist the faithful in ‘gain[ing] eternal salvation for their souls and the adornment of sober and pure eloquence for their speech’ (1.pref.1). The classical, republican Roman ideal of the orator as a ‘good man skilled in [public] speaking’, *vir bonus dicendi peritus*, died hard.¹⁵² There is still something of it in that reminiscence of the 530s, with its implication that the educated Christian would acquire a facility of ‘pure speech’ with which to address his fellows. By the 580s at Squillace, the old man is mainly preaching eloquence for the eyes: the eloquence of the divine page. *Oratio*, persuasive discourse, is assimilated to *orthographia*, correct writing.¹⁵³

The sayings of Scripture ‘describe the past without fiction, and reveal more of the present than is seen, and tell of the future as if it had already taken place. Truth rules everywhere in them; everywhere divine excellence shines forth; everywhere benefits to the human race are revealed’ (1.16.1). All other texts and discourses, by obvious implication, dim in the presence of this one. When Quintilian, in Book 10 of the *Institutio oratoria*, drew up a list of literary works to be read by the future orator, he meant them to form and nourish the speaker’s own style. Rhetorical training realized itself in oral performance. A late graduate himself of Quintilian’s school,¹⁵⁴ Cassiodorus in his *Institutio* reduces (and elevates) the ideal reader to receptive awe in the presence of a text whose *ipsissima verba* penetrate the human soul. The promulgation of those saving words first of all demanded, not human

152 *Inst.* 2.2.10, citing Quintilian, and 2.2.1. Fontaine, ‘Cassiodore et Isidore’, 82, remarks on the importance of the figure of the preacher (*praedicator*) as Christian orator in the thought of Augustine, Gregory the Great and Isidore of Seville; likewise Banniard, with the same choice of authors and excluding Cassiodorus. Parkes, *Pause and Effect*, 17, places the work of Cassiodorus at Vivarium within a culture still ‘dominated by the ideal of the *vir eloquentissimus*’ (9).

153 Note the definition of *orthographia* at 2.1.2: *o. est rectitudo scribendi nullo errore vitata, quae manum componit et linguam* (‘spelling, or correctness of writing unspoiled by error, puts the hand and the tongue in harmony’). The harmony of hand and tongue is that of a reader pen-in-hand.

154 Fontaine, ‘Cassiodore et Isidore’, 80, stresses the echo of Quintilian’s title in Cassiodorus’. Cf. n. 75 above and Rand, ‘New Cassiodorus’, 435 and n. 2: ‘The title *Institutiones* alone would suggest, in Cassiodorus’ day, rather one of the variety of law-books than anything else... Quintilian’s *Institutio Oratoria*... is a different affair.’ Neither the difference nor the similarity should be ignored: the Roman traditions of rhetorical training and of law were *both* contributing to this new pedagogy in the (silent) eloquence of the Divine Law. The parallel with Lactantius’ *Divinae institutiones* (1.1.12) cited by Rand is to the point.

oratory, but disciplined work of the eye and hand. Presumably there were others besides Cassiodorus with a rhetorical training at Vivarium, at least in the early decades, whose skills would have been put to use.¹⁵⁵ They would be among the persons with ‘a good knowledge of divine and secular letters’ mentioned at 1.15.1. But they would not be making speeches, any more than Cassiodorus now would—at least not outside the pages of the *Institutions* and related works. Here the public orator’s day was done. When the master of Vivarium singles out a particular group of literate persons from among his company, the term he uses in referring to them is derived, not from any of the traditionally ‘liberal’ arts, but from the practical and formerly servile art of shorthand (*ars notaria*, from the word for a graphic mark, *nota*). *Notarii*, he suggests, will be best equipped for the task of deciphering and emending old biblical manuscripts (1.pref.9). If this statement means what it seems to, then the most literally critical function in the Vivarian *scriptorium* was assigned to men originally trained to take dictation.¹⁵⁶ The ancient oratorical ideal had been turned on its head.

Apart from this prefatory mention of *notarii* and the very general reference to those skilled in secular as well as divine letters in 1.16, the first half of *Inst.* 1 does not afford many insights into the personnel of Vivarium. In the course of listing biblical commentaries in 1.1–9, Cassiodorus commends several individuals whose talents ran to original exegesis (Bellator), biblical scholarship without book (Eusebius), or translation from Greek into Latin (Epiphanius, Bellator, Mutianus). The last three are described as ‘friends of ours’ (*amici nostri*) at 1.9.5, a distinction they share with whoever assisted Cassiodorus in his collation of the ‘nine codices’ of Scripture (1.pref.8) and those, if not the same, who undertook the Latin translation of Josephus’ *Jewish Antiquities* (1.17.1).¹⁵⁷ Despite these personal touches and other local references, it is possible to read most of *Inst.* 1 as a bibliographical handbook of general application; this was how it was generally read in the Middle Ages, when no one cared to reconstruct the life and times

155 For palaeographical evidence of the diverse educational attainments of members of the Vivarian community see below p. 97.

156 On the rising status of *notarii* or ‘shorthand writers’ in the late Roman empire and their roles in civil and ecclesiastical administration, see Teitler; Hagendahl, ‘Bedeutung’. Teitler’s interpretation (204–206) of the sense of *notarii* in *Inst.* seems unnecessarily restrictive; Vessey, ‘From *Cursus* to *Ductus*’, 85–86. For the different kinds of *notae* (stenographic, grammatical/text-critical, bibliographic) available to and deployed by Vivarian scribes see Isidore, *Etym.* 1.20–22; Halporn, ‘Methods of Reference’; Parkes, *Pause and Effect*, 10–11.

157 Van de Vyver, ‘Cassiodore et son oeuvre’, 264–66; Pricoco, ‘Spiritualità monastica’, 362–63.

of Cassiodorus or of Vivarium.¹⁵⁸ It is only in the later chapters that the book becomes more consistently ‘domestic’, and so more open to interpretation as a historical document of a monastery (and not merely of its library). By the end of 1.23, Cassiodorus has said almost all he has to say about particular Christian books; the few titles still to be listed are mainly in geography (1.25), horticulture (1.28.6) and medicine (1.31.2), and the Christian books that he does mention are, as we shall see, directly related to the lifestyle of the monks.

Amid the flurry of other ‘useful’ books that follows the chapter on ‘The Excellence of Divine Scripture’ are three titles of special importance for the genre and genesis of the *Institutions* and its programme. They are Augustine’s critical review of his own life’s literary production, the *Retractationes*, together with the more comprehensive listing of his works by Possidius of Calama (1.16.4),¹⁵⁹ and the collective inventory of Christian writers begun by Jerome and continued by Gennadius of Marseille, the *De viris illustribus* or ‘On Famous Men’ (1.17.2). In some combination, we have assumed, these catalogues helped form the bibliographical consciousness that is manifested in the *Institutions*.¹⁶⁰ As cited at this point, they serve mainly to point up the originality (and conservatism) of Cassiodorus’ work. His has not been the trail-blazing theological career of an Augustine, almost devouring itself in its relentless forward motion and leaving many observers, even among the most sympathetic, bemused if not alarmed. Where the dominant sense of the Augustinian *retractatio* is of personal progress through composition, consultation and substantive self-correction,¹⁶¹ the underlying message both of the Cassiodorian *institutio* and of the summary of his *totum opus* in the *Orthography* is one of textual restoration, purification and consolidation, collaboratively conceived. Nor does Cassiodorus seek to duplicate the serial, chronological listing of Christian ‘literature’ provided by Jerome and Gennadius; it is enough to refer his monks to it. His taxonomy is of another kind. Where Jerome’s and Augustine’s bibliographies are author-based and narrative, Cassiodorus’ is non-narrative, achronic, ‘authorial’ only in the special sense that it subordinates all textual reference to the ‘divine authority’ of the Bible.

158 Below p. 94. Pricoco, ‘Spiritualità monastica’, 358, stresses the severe limits on our knowledge of monastic life at Vivarium.

159 On the relation of these two bibliographies see Madec.

160 Above pp. 17, 35.

161 The Augustinian ‘cursive’ style of literary production: Vessey, ‘*Opus Imperfectum*’ and ‘From *Cursus* to *Ductus*’, 48–52

It would be surprising, given Cassiodorus' direct experience of 'changing events and the transformations of kingdoms' (1.17.1) and his historiographic work as a servant of Gothic kings, if he gave no space to 'Christian Historians'. The works of these 'reporters of [their] times' (*relatores temporum*) are placed after those of the commentators on Scripture, as adjuncts to a correct appreciation of the one truly reliable narrative of past, present and future, which is the sacred history intimated, and partly revealed, by the Bible.¹⁶² The 'divine radiance' that readers of non-biblical Christian histories are expected to perceive (1.17.2) is co-original with the light of the Scripture. So too is the light reflected by the 'stars' of the Latin church whom Cassiodorus commemorates in chapters 18–22.

These thumbnail sketches of leading Latin Fathers are among the flatter passages of the *Institutions*. Cassiodorus' admiration, though clearly unfeigned, barely resists his system, which downgrades the individual 'author' in favour of the total Text of biblical orthodoxy. Hilary, while too difficult for some, is nonetheless a master of biblical figures (1.18). The martyr Cyprian erred on the question of rebaptism but helpfully expounded the Lord's Prayer (1.19). The notice on Ambrose (1.20) is all but lost. Augustine (1.22) gets a short general appreciation, then the *Confessions* is cited as evidence of his unaided mastery of the 'mathematical' disciplines: a pointer forward to *Inst.* 2. Also signposted are the bishop of Hippo's sermons on the Apostles' Creed and handbook *On Heresies*, useful guides (positive and negative) to Catholic dogma.

The chapter on Jerome (1.21) would be the same length as the one on Augustine—a well-turned summary of his many-sided oeuvre, clinched by a conceit on his Levantine eloquence—had not his Letter 53 to Paulinus, with its synopsis of the scriptural canon, called for special comment (1.21.2). Cassiodorus claims not to have discovered this text until late in the day; if he had seen it sooner, he says, he might have spared himself the trouble of the present work. The statement may be disingenuous, even chronologically misleading. For had he come across the text in question early enough, say in the 540s or 550s, the contrast that he now draws between Jerome's liberally educated reader(ship) and his own audience of 'simple and uneducated brothers' would not have fitted the case, except as extremely stylized modesty. Even at this late date, in the 580s, he can still evoke a company of

162 The underlying theory is Augustinian, set forth in the *City of God* and elsewhere. There is a short preface by Cassiodorus to Epiphanius' Latin epitome of the Greek ecclesiastical historians Socrates, Sozomen and Theodoret, in which he recommends the work for its 'utility' and 'informativeness' (CSEL 71.1–2).

learned friends who do not sound entirely unworthy of the author of the dialogue *On the Soul*. Yet apparently the situation was changing, and the needs of less sophisticated Christian readers had to be considered too. In future, the work that Cassiodorus prescribed would have to be carried forward—if it was to be carried forward at all—by individuals without a traditional training in grammar and rhetoric.¹⁶³ The reference to the intellectual limitations of the Vivarian monks at 1.21.2 is the first of its kind and leads swiftly to a justification for Book 2. Later chapters contain further preludes to the (revised) treatise ‘On Human Learning’—so many signs that, wherever and whenever he began the project of the *Institutions*, Cassiodorus was now adapting it to its final setting.

Labouring to make the best provision he could for his monks, anxious not to omit anything that might be useful, Cassiodorus expands the already baggy structure of his treatise. (Note how few of his careful divisions of subject matter commit him *in advance*.) His contemporaries, Eugippius and Dionysius (1.23), are manifestly not in the same rank as Augustine and the other ‘fathers’, however potentially valuable their patristic and canonical compilations to the monks, and however interesting to us as terms of comparison for Cassiodorus’ own enterprise. Eugippius receives only decent mention, the reference to ‘my relative Proba’ (1.23.1) momentarily recalling the proprieties of the *Order of the House of the Cassiodori*. The longer notice on Dionysius (nicknamed ‘Exiguus’, the Short) begins to take on the proportions of a separate ‘life’. Cassiodorus sees the danger, cuts it off, moves to a final recapitulation.¹⁶⁴ For the very last time (1.24.1), we are summoned back to the main ground of the whole proceeding: the biblical text (*auctoritas* [sc. *divina*]) as expounded in approved works of exegesis (*expositores*), to which this and a few similar works (*introductorii libri*) are propaedeutic. It only remains for the author to offer hints for the understanding of places where the scriptural text is still uncommented, then urge the student onward in mind to ‘[the] contemplation that does not merely sound in the ears but lights the interior eye’ (1.24.3). With this, Cassiodorus

163 Despite Justinian’s provision of salaries for teachers in the Pragmatic Sanction (554), ‘so that young men schooled in the liberal arts might abound in the State’, there is scant evidence of the continuity of institutions of higher education in Italy in the later sixth century: Riché, 140–45. For the persistence—and limits—of Roman legal-administrative culture see also T.S. Brown, 79–81, who plots the emergence in the next century of an aristocracy distinguished by military prowess rather than the quality of its education; Heather, ‘Literacy and Power’; Browning, ‘Education’; further discussion below pp. 99f.

164 On Cassiodorus’ seeming indifference to the ‘popular’ genre of hagiography see Prinz. But note *Inst.* 1.32.4.

would seem to have discharged all that he promised in the preface concerning ‘Divine Learning’. Yet nine chapters are still outstanding, among them some of the most absorbingly circumstantial in the book.

- 1.25–26: supplements: geographers, critical marks

With the exception of the final prayer (1.33), none of these remaining chapters obviously belongs in its present place. The first (1.25: ‘Geographers to be Read by Monks’) looks like a necessary component of the Vivarian bibliography which, because of the rigidity of Cassiodorus’ conception of ‘Christian readings’, could not be inserted earlier. Allowance made for the more practical terms in which they are recommended, the same can be said of the medical books in 1.31 and the horticultural books of 1.28.6. Another faithful reader of Augustine’s *Christian Teaching* might have found room for these subjects within a single classification of ‘useful’ disciplines like that adopted by Cassiodorus for Book 2, provided he didn’t insist on restricting their number to seven.¹⁶⁵ Chapter 26, on ‘Critical Marks to be Added to Texts’, is an extended footnote to the previous discussion of the way to read the fathers. (What might Cassiodorus’ work have looked like if he had known the use of footnotes?)

- 1.27, 28–33: transition to Book 2; further supplements; conclusion of Book 1

Chapter 27, on ‘Figures and Disciplines’, provides a natural transition to Book 2 or alternative ending to Book 1, and is among the clearest pieces of evidence we have for the multiple revision undergone by this work on the way to its latest ‘Cassiodorian’ or authorial form. It is also notably free of references to the particular conditions of the Vivarian monastery. At some (subsequent?) point, however, Cassiodorus evidently felt obliged to indicate an alternative to the full course of studies in Book 2, for the sake of the ‘simple brothers’ who were not up to it. The result is the ample chapter 28, entitled ‘Reading for Those Who Cannot Attempt Advanced Study’, which introduces a series of chapters closely tied to the life of the monastery. The higher kinds of scribal and editorial work are not lost from sight but now take their place in a more varied social and material landscape. If one wanted to set a concise and fairly self-contained text of Cassiodorus alongside the *Rule of Benedict* or another short, normative document of early western monasticism, *Inst.* 1.28–33 would stand the comparison.

¹⁶⁵ For the division of *artes* between *Inst.* 1 and 2 see Della Corte, 31–32.

In truth, 1.28 does not concede much. After granting, as he was bound to, that wisdom is not coterminous with literary learning and that God has many ways of instructing the faithful, Cassiodorus restates his basically Augustinian conviction of the qualified utility of secular learning for Christians. For the purpose, he selects Augustine's image of 'spoiling the Egyptians' from Book 2 of *Christian Teaching*. Only after urging all persons to strive to the best of their ability for mastery of human as well as divine teaching (1.28.4: *utrasque doctrinas*) does he hold out the 'simple' alternative of cultivating the monastery garden—and even then his first thought is to recommend suitable reading. Yet having gone outside at last, book in hand, Cassiodorus takes a pleasure in the sights and products of his Vivarian estate that is as far removed from Augustine's introspection in the garden at Milan as it is from Petrarch's in the Vacluse. Here indeed is a monastery with 'all ancient conveniences' and a local lord who knows how to issue an invitation (1.29.1).¹⁶⁶ Of course the delights of the place are only transitory, but Cassiodorus resists the temptation to allegorize them or its name: the monks' sights are set on heaven—in the meantime these fishponds (*vivaria*) are full of fish! At a stroke, if only for a moment, he reverses the ideological scorched-earth policy of Jerome, Cassian and other ascetic teachers intent on turning the most temperate parts of the northern Mediterranean countryside into a simulacrum of the Egyptian desert. The 'classic' choice between eremitic and coenobitic monasticism, proposed on the basis of Cassian's work (1.29.2-3), appears less daunting. A month in one of those *gîtes* on Monte Castello may not have been too hard.

The theme of choice of monastic lifestyles leads Cassiodorus to declare his own choice among types of physical labour, or the one he would make for others, and naturally it is the work of the book-writing scribe or *antiquarius* (1.30.1). The new, graphocentric theory of Christian 'eloquence' that we have found insinuating itself at several points in the *Institutions* now receives its sharpest formulation: 'A blessed purpose, a praiseworthy zeal, to preach to men with the hand (*manu praedicare*), to set tongues free with one's fingers and in silence to give mankind salvation...' Conceits and images multiply: the scribe wounds Satan with his pen, his three fingers number off the persons of the Trinity, he inscribes the Law like Jehovah at Sinai. 'O sight most glorious to those who consider it well!'—that of a man copying the Scripture.¹⁶⁷ Mark you, the copyist must observe the truth of the

166 The phrase in quotation marks is borrowed from Gibson, *Bible in the Latin West*, 3.

167 Bertini, 96; Milde, 'Cassiodor über Handschriften'. Compare the praise of secular scribes as civic archivists in *Var.* XII.21 and the praise of parchment in *Var.* XI.38.

letter. And so once more the *Institutions* becomes, if not an orthography, then the next thing to it (1.30.2). The compendium *On Orthography* is only one of the instruments furnished by Cassiodorus to his book-making monks: he has also supplied a set of sample bindings, self-regulating oil-lamps, and two kinds of clock (1.30.3-5).¹⁶⁸ Having reached this level of everyday detail, it was perhaps only fitting that he should now insert a chapter on medical writers (1.31).

As *Inst.* 1.28–33 constitutes a kind of domestic regime within the book as a whole, so chapter 32 is the closest Cassiodorus comes to delivering a monastic rule in due form. Characteristically, he makes a point of referring to other normative statements, beginning with the ‘rules of the fathers,’ which he places alongside his own commands (1.32.1). After remarks directed mainly to the (two!) serving abbots, Chalcedonius and Gerontius, he broadens his address to the whole company, representing the monastery as ‘a kind of city’ whose citizens already enjoy a foretaste of the heavenly City of God. The ability to anticipate the future state of bliss, as he makes plain, depends on their use of the Scriptures ‘with their commentaries’. For the time being, those texts *are* their paradise. Through study of them, they will learn... eloquence. Here at least there is a strong hint that the loosening of tongues in biblical measures will lead others in the right way (1.32.3). The promise of ‘pure’ Christian speech, made in the preface, is fulfilled. Given the context, we might assume that Cassiodorus has in mind principally the recruitment and instruction of other monks, to replenish this godly city of a monastery on earth.¹⁶⁹ Biblically acquired eloquence thus serves to introduce new members into the community of Scripture. Similarly, the lives and passions of the martyrs, Jerome’s letters of ascetic exhortation and other ‘heroic’ texts of the monastic tradition are there to stir the reader up, not to any similar feats of their own, but to a life of *moderation* in contact with the sacred text.

The whole monastic endeavour is summed up by Cassiodorus in a phrase of Jerome: ‘Love the knowledge of Scripture and you will not love the sins of the flesh’ (1.32.4). The order is revealing: love Scripture first, and

¹⁶⁸ The same two kinds of clock, one a sun-dial, the other a water-clock for use at night or on cloudy days, are mentioned as gifts to the Burgundian king Gundobad in *Var.* **I.46** (dated c.506).

¹⁶⁹ *Inst.* 1.30.1 ...*si non cupiditatis ambitu sed recto studio* (‘provided [the scribe labours] not at the urging of greed but in a virtuous pursuit’) may, however, hint at the sale of products of the Vivarian scriptorium outside the monastery: thus Riché, 163 n. 161. See also Barnish, ‘Work of Cassiodorus’, 167.

the rest shall be added unto you! The love of (divine) letters and the desire for God have rarely, if ever, been more closely associated than they are in the closing pages of Book 1 of the *Institutions*.¹⁷⁰ Cassiodorus knows and says that knowledge of Scripture is a means of overcoming sin and living well (1.32.7). He believes that it is a way of coming to God (e.g. 2.concl.4). As often as not, however, he frames his thought in a manner that suggests that penetration of the mysteries of the Bible is the highest good presently attainable. So he begins his final prayer: ‘Give, Lord, advancement to those who *read*, remission of all sins to those who seek to *learn your law*, so that we who greatly desire to *come to the light of your Scriptures* may not be blinded by darkening sin’ (1.33.1). And he ends it by calling on the brothers to ‘hasten to *advance in Sacred Scripture...*’ (1.33.4).

Summarizing, we can see the following broad structure and development in the first book of the *Institutions*:

	pref.	
1–10	Bible with commentary and ‘introductions’	
	11 accepted church councils	
	12–14 divisions of the Bible	
15	correction of biblical text (and study of the fathers for their exegesis)	
16	excellence of the Bible (and other resources:	
	17 historians	
	18–22 Latin Fathers	
	23 Eugippius, Dionysius)	
24	recapitulation	‘BIBLIOGRAPHY’
	[supplements:	
	25 geographers	
	26 critical marks]	
27	transition to Book 2: ‘On Secular Learning’	
28	fuller rationale for Book 2, and exceptions	‘RULE’
29–30	situation of the monastery and work of the monks; praise of scribes	
	31 medical writers	
32	address to the abbots and community	
33	prayer	

170 The formula, though not the judgment, is Leclercq’s: see below pp. 88–89.

Book 2: The Liberal Arts

• preface

To the thirty-three chapters of his first book, one for each year of Christ's life on earth, Cassiodorus will add as many more on 'secular letters' as there are days in the week (2.pref.1). To mark the liaison, the first words of the preface to Book 2 are 'the preceding book', *superior liber*. Each book completes the other, in mimicry of the arithmetical perfection of God's universe (2.pref.3). But it was not always so. Before it grew into 'Book 2' (and even afterwards) the Cassiodorian digest of the liberal arts was a separate work 'On Secular Learning' with a textual life of its own. With a little ingenuity, its original contours can still be made out beneath the surface of the two-volume *Institutions*.¹⁷¹ It began: 'It is our intention and desire to write down some material briefly on the art of grammar or rhetoric or on the disciplines.'¹⁷² We must start with the principles of these matters, and must speak first of the art of grammar, which is clearly the origin and basis of the liberal letters...' (2.pref.4). Then followed a list of subjects in the order in which they appear in the finished *Institutions*: grammar, rhetoric, dialectic; arithmetic, music, geometry and astronomy—the latter already grouped apart as 'mathematical' sciences. The same division and order of subject matter can be discerned behind the apparatus of *notae* to the *Explanation of the Psalms*, a work we may think of as conjugate with the treatise 'On Human Learning'.¹⁷³ It is the division and order of the medieval *trivium* and *quadrivium*, the future 'arts' curriculum of the universities.

The history of the 'liberal arts' begins in the Athens of Plato and Aristotle (cf. *Inst.* 2.3.1) and follows the main vectors of the classical tradition. The idea of a comprehensive and coordinated cycle of studies (in Greek, *enkyklios paideia*) was familiar to such influential Roman writers as Varro, Cicero and Quintilian, some of whose Latin formulations remained current in later periods. The proto-medieval system of seven arts or disciplines, in which the three subjects of the future *trivium* are linked with the four mathematical sciences of the *quadrivium*, was once taken for a fixed property of Graeco-

¹⁷¹ Above pp. 39–41.

¹⁷² For Cassiodorus' attempts to distinguish between 'arts' and 'disciplines' see below pp. 72–73. In all unmarked cases, the terms will be used interchangeably here.

¹⁷³ CCSL 97.2: '... figures (*schemata*), etymologies, interpretation of names [= grammar]; the rhetorical art; topics, syllogisms [= dialectic, also including 'definitions', listed earlier]; arithmetic, geometry, music, astronomy.' For the *Exp.Ps.* as 'textbook of the liberal arts' and its relationship to the separate treatise 'On Secular Learning', see above pp. 34–35, 41–42.

Roman culture from as early as the first century BC, but is now held to have originated in Greek Platonic milieux of the second and third centuries AD.¹⁷⁴ It is first clearly attested by Latin writers from the late fourth century onwards: by Augustine, in his early dialogue *On Order*, presumed to be following a lost Greek source; by Martianus Capella, in his *Marriage of Mercury and Philology* of the later (?) fifth century; and by Cassiodorus. Although Cassiodorus could have known of Augustine's aborted project for a series of *Disciplinarum libri* ('Books of Disciplines') from his *Retractationes*,¹⁷⁵ there is no sure sign that he knew the dialogue *On Order*.¹⁷⁶ He tells us himself that he had sought in vain for Martianus' work (*Inst.* 2.3.20; cf. 2.2.17).¹⁷⁷ Whence then did he derive his scheme of the liberal arts? The best conjecture seems to be that he was following a Greek commentary (in Latin translation?) on Porphyry's *Isagoge* ('Introduction') to Aristotle's *Categories*, a text which stood at the beginning of the late antique philosophy curriculum; that is the tradition reflected in the division of philosophical disciplines at *Inst.* 2.3.3–8.¹⁷⁸ For his ordering of the mathematical

174 I. Hadot, revising a consensus based largely on the work of Marrou.

175 *Inst.* 1.16.4 and esp. 2.2.17 (a passage present only in the two-book recension); 2.1.1 (A.'s *De grammatica*, another later addition); 2.5.10 (his *De musica*, already in the early version). See Augustine, *Retr.* 1.6 (CCSL 57.17): 'Around the same time, as I was preparing to receive baptism at Milan, I also set about writing books of the disciplines (*disciplinarum libros*) ..., desirous of making or leading the way from corporeal to incorporeal things, as if by certain steps. But of the disciplines in question I succeeded only in finishing the book *On Grammar*, which later went missing from my bookcase, and six volumes *On Music*... and those I wrote after I was baptized, having returned from Italy to Africa... Of the other five disciplines on which I had likewise begun to write [in Italy]—on dialectic, on rhetoric, on geometry, on arithmetic, on philosophy—only the first drafts were extant, and those too have since gone astray, though I believe that certain persons have them in their possession.' Note that Augustine's order of the seven liberal arts is not identical with Cassiodorus'. Dialectic precedes rhetoric (as in other lists); arithmetic comes after geometry; astronomy is omitted here in favour of philosophy, though it duly appears after geometry in the *De ordine* (where arithmetic is displaced instead). After Marrou, *Saint Augustin et la fin*, 187–275, see I. Hadot, 101–36; O'Donnell, *Augustine: 'Confessions'*, 2.269–78. For Cassiodorus' knowledge of a treatise *De grammatica* attributed to Augustine see *Inst.* 1.1.1 and note.

176 Thus I. Hadot, 191. The same scholar considers that in citing the example of 'our holy Fathers' at *Inst.* 2.3.22 Cassiodorus may have been 'think[ing] of Augustine and the doctrine of liberal studies that he had expounded in the *De ordine*', but the allusion is too general to bear any precise inference.

177 Pizzani, 51, nevertheless posits the possible influence of Martianus' work on the definitive redaction of *Inst.* 2.

178 Courcelle, *Late Latin Writers*, 341–44, argued for direct dependence on the commentary of Ammonius of Alexandria; his thesis has been disputed by Mair, 'Manual for Monks'

disciplines he appears to have followed the lead of Nicomachus of Gerasa, whose treatise on arithmetic had been translated into Latin by Apuleius and then by Boethius (2.4.7).¹⁷⁹ Source-hunting in a case like this can, however, quickly become distracting. Cassiodorus' method is eclectic and harmonizing. Wherever possible, he will reconcile materials from different traditions (Greek and Latin, Aristotelian and Platonic, Christian and non-Christian), with scant regard—it may now seem—for conceptual rigour.¹⁸⁰ A full apparatus of possible sources and parallels for Book 2 of the *Institutions* would be very elaborate. The notes to the translation below aim to provide a basic orientation to texts and scholarship. Rather than summarize what will be found there, the following paragraphs begin to ponder the effects and motives of this curious exercise in the repackaging of knowledge.¹⁸¹

Excursus: The unity of 'biblical' knowledge

The singularity of Cassiodorus' 'On Secular Learning' deserves more notice than it has been given. It is a rare mind in any age that will undertake to survey, in writing, the whole charted realm of learning. Aristotle's followers in the 'Alexandrian' school, it is true, had made a speciality of catalogues and classifications, and they included the Roman Varro, whose example far outlived his works. But there were few pretenders to polymathy in the West after the early imperial period. Among those not Christian, Apuleius would be the last of note, and his philosophical culture was unusual.¹⁸² Jerome was famous in his time for dropping the names of Greek authors he could not

and I. Hadot, 199–202, the latter concluding that Cassiodorus had access 'to a commentary on the *Isagoge* in the same tradition as Ammonius, characterized by a certain fidelity to Aristotelian tradition'. For a convincing reassertion (against Mair) of the Ammonian component see Pizzani, 52–56.

179 Courcelle, *Late Latin Writers*, 344, 347; I. Hadot, 202–05. Moorhead, 'Cassiodorus', surveys the Latin tradition of ordering the liberal arts down to Cassiodorus.

180 Pizzani, 50, discerns 'a convergence of diverse strands in an effort at synthesis that is not entirely free of incoherence', and not entirely explicable as a product of multiple redaction.

181 The approach here taken to Cassiodorus' treatment of the liberal arts owes much to an unpublished paper by Carlotta Dionisotti.

182 See S.J. Harrison, 36–38, pointing out that '[i]f Apuleius aimed at a form of encyclopaedic coverage, it was through a number of separate works rather than a single *magnum opus*'. Macrobius' *Saturnalia*, written at Rome around the beginning of the second quarter of the fifth century, provides a singular glimpse of the 'encyclopaedic' culture of non(?)-Christian Latin milieux in the period in which Augustine was composing the *City of God*. Cassiodorus' knowledge of this work remains to be demonstrated.

have read; his bold and astonishingly successful bid to redefine the sphere of valuable knowledge in terms of canonical Scripture is largely the reflex of a man trained in the narrowly literary-rhetorical and chauvinistically Roman-imperial culture of the fourth-century Latin ‘renaissance’. Augustine, despite claims sometimes made for him as a representative *lettré de la décadence* (Marrou) was an exception.¹⁸³ Not without reason does Cassiodorus recall Augustine’s boast of teaching himself subjects others found too difficult.¹⁸⁴ Whatever the actual limitations of Augustine’s self-taught ‘general’ culture, his reach exceeded that of most of his Latin contemporaries. It is not surprising, then, that he should be our first witness to a philosophically coherent scheme of the liberal arts.¹⁸⁵ And yet, as we have seen, Augustine never completed his project of a ‘Christian’ cycle of the disciplines. Already in *Christian Teaching* and the *Confessions* he treats the liberal arts as an alien formation, and makes a point of not referring to them by their customary (Greek) titles.¹⁸⁶ When he returns for the last time to evaluate the inherited resources of Graeco-Roman culture, in the *City of God* (413–27), the scheme of the liberal arts plays no part in his presentation. Thus, while his *Christian Teaching* offered a rationale for subordination of traditional forms of learning to study of the Bible, as well as hints for the compendious treatment of subjects useful for biblical exegesis,¹⁸⁷ Augustine left no brief for a Christian synopsis of ‘secular’ intellectual culture. Lacking that or any formal model, Cassiodorus was forced to improvise. The separate treatise ‘On Secular Learning’ and the revised *Explanation of the Psalms*, with its marginal key to the liberal arts, are stages of an experiment that culminated around the year 580 in the two-book *Institutions*. At that moment, almost

183 So too for his philosophical interests was Marius Victorinus, who appears several times as a source or authority in *Inst.* 2. Victorinus’ engagement with and translation of Greek textbook-literature prefigures the work of Boethius (on which, see Courcelle, *Late Latin Writers*, 273–330; Chadwick). But neither went as far as Augustine, or Cassiodorus, in theorizing and proceduralizing the relations between biblical and liberal studies.

184 *Inst.* 1.22, referring to *Conf.* 4.16.28, 30: ‘What did it profit me, that... I read [Aristotle’s *Categories*] by myself and understood them? ... What did it profit me... that I read by myself and understood all the books of the arts they call liberal... You know, O my lord God, all that I learned, without any human being to teach me, of the dimensions of figures [geometry], of things musical, and of numbers [arithmetic].’ As at *Retr.* 1.6 (above n. 175), Augustine excludes astronomy from the ‘mathematical’ disciplines; on the danger of confusing this science with astrological fatalism, see e.g. *Doct.chr.* 2.29.46, cited by Cassiodorus, *Inst.* 2.7.4.

185 In the *De ordine* and the projected *Disciplinarum libri*.

186 Above p. 33.

187 *Doct.chr.* 2.39.59.

two centuries after the promulgation by Jerome and Augustine of a biblically centred system of Christian knowledge, Latin readers were provided *for the first time* with a synthesis of biblical and extra-biblical learning that claimed a measure of theoretical completeness.¹⁸⁸ Here were the basic materials of a Christian ‘literary’ education, all enclosed within a single pair of covers—in *uno corpore*, as Cassiodorus himself liked to say.¹⁸⁹

The two books of the *Institutions* are of almost exactly the same length. As the ratio of thirty-three to seven chapters already suggests, however, the *comprehensiveness* of Book 2 is of a different kind from that of Book 1. The preface to *Inst.* 1 imparts only the vaguest sense of the book’s structure, and it is not until the author’s discourse rounds on itself at 1.10.1 (‘After reading this work...’) that we begin to see that the Bible in nine ‘sections’ or *codices* will constitute the unity-and-totality to which all subsequent ‘divine readings’, as yet unnumbered, will be referred. *Inst.* 1.1–9 defines a core library of biblical text and commentary that can be expanded indefinitely without alteration to its structure, since it will never (in theory) be anything other than a vast interpretative reinscription of Scripture itself. A similar dynamic governs the *Explanation of the Psalms*. The Psalter, says Cassiodorus, is both portal and epitome of the Bible (*Exp.Ps.* pref., esp. 16; cf. *Inst.* 1.pref.8; 4). Like the reader of *Inst.* 1, the reader of the Psalm commentary is placed at the centre of an expanding textual universe whose core contents are firmly circumscribed and tallied off. Not only does the Psalter open on the entirety of the sacred text, it also contains within itself the whole cycle of the liberal arts, which (so far as they are true) are thereby referred back to the Bible. In similar fashion, as we have seen, the compendium ‘On Secular Learning’ is taken ‘as read’ in *Inst.* 1, even though it comes second in the order of the text; once again, the Bible is supposed to contain all knowledge.

There is a principle operating here that can be more plainly stated: a main effect of the *Institutions*, as of the revised *Explanation of the Psalms*, is to abridge what can properly be known *outside* the Bible and incorporate it in the biblical dispensation.

Instrumental to this process is the naming and numbering of the liberal arts. Whereas Augustine’s writings from the mid-390s onwards tend to blur the traditional divisions of ‘secular’ learning, Cassiodorus draws those divisions more sharply than ever, and to set purpose. Augustine had been

188 Della Corte, 43: ‘Cassiodorus may well be called the first Christian encyclopaedist’. On his role as continuator of the pedagogical initiatives of fourth-century Latin Christian writers see M. Zelzer, esp. 228–29.

189 For the significance of this principle see below n. 269.

striving to institute a new Christian pedagogy, based on the Bible, in the face of living traditions of another kind of intellectual culture. Cassiodorus' situation was different. However imperfect, not to say fragile, the practical arrangements for an identifiably Christian education still might be (*Inst.* 1.pref.1), the case for it no longer had to be argued. 'There was no pagan culture now' (above, n. 24). Or, dispensing with the prejudicial term 'pagan', we could say that there was no longer any possible resistance to a thoroughgoing Christian *definition* of culture. Secure in the biblical programme of Augustinian type that he outlines in *Inst.* 1, not needing to polemicize against any competitor, Cassiodorus was free to take possession for himself and his readers, at minimal expense, of the movables of Graeco-Roman *paideia*. Here at last was the 'spoiling of the Egyptians'. Book 2 of the *Institutions* has been represented in the past as a rescue deal for classical culture; it would be more realistic to see it as an asset-stripper's inventory. 'Human letters', or the more portable parts of them, are boxed up and rebranded for what is now a divine monopoly of learning.

In listing the seven liberal arts and making a quick shift to explain the category of 'mathematical' sciences, Cassiodorus has in fact expounded 'the order of the entire book' (2.pref.5, already present in the earliest form of the text). Whatever he or his disciples might add in later recensions, that structure would hold. Now, he says, he will work through the announced 'divisions and definitions', citing the names of '[the] authors, both Greek and Latin, who have been important in explaining [these] matters', so that those 'who are eager to read may, with the guidance of this summary, understand the words of the earlier writers more clearly' (*ibid.*). The basic pattern of exposition is the same for each of the seven subjects treated: (1) definition of art or discipline; (2) summary of main elements and/or list of paradigms; (3) bibliography, with particular reference to materials available for further study at Vivarium.

- grammar

The relative brevity of the chapter on grammar can be explained partly by Cassiodorus' early decision to compile a separate *codex de grammatica*¹⁹⁰ and partly by the fact that this subject, more so than others, lent itself to

190 On the formation of this codex see Holtz, *Donat*, 248–50, who takes the list of contents provided by the *phi* and *delta* recensions of 'On Secular Learning' at *Inst.* 2.1.3 to represent the last state of the collection in Cassiodorus' own lifetime. In both recensions, that list is followed by material inserted by a later compiler; see the notes on the translation for details.

development in a specifically *biblical*-scholarly context. In the marginal annotations to the *Explanation of the Psalms* there are symbols for ‘figures’, ‘etymologies’ and ‘the interpretation of names’, all topics within the province of Greek or Latin grammar that took on new significance in relation to a work of Hebrew literature (cf. *Inst.* 1.15). The perfunctoriness of *Inst.* 2.1 is thus, paradoxically, a measure of grammar’s real importance for the kind of Christian learning promoted at Vivarium. Even so, the repackaged subject is barely half its former self.

Cassiodorus is true to tradition when he states: ‘Grammar is the skill of speaking stylishly, gathered from famous poets and writers; its function is to compose prose and verse without fault; its purpose is to please by the impeccable skill of polished speech or writing’ (2.1.1). What his definition almost conceals is the close relationship, in the school of the classical grammarian, between the pursuit of elegant utterance and the detailed study of model authors, notably poets.¹⁹¹ The character of this study is well attested in the late antique *artes grammaticae* and in commentaries such as Servius’ on Virgil. It required each text of the chosen author to be carefully prepared for reading aloud (*lectio*), expounded for its linguistic-rhetorical features and cultural-historical content (*enarratio*), checked for conformity to the norms of Hellenism or Latinity and corrected where necessary (*emendatio*), and finally confirmed in its place in the ‘canon’ of approved works (*iudicium*). The relevance of these terms and procedures to the plan of biblical study in *Inst.* 1 will be immediately apparent.¹⁹² Cassiodorus’ interest in punctuation and other aspects of the textual layout of the Bible, such as Jerome’s innovative presentation of certain books *per cola et commata*, expands the scope of scholastic *lectio*. The collection of commentaries and interpretative aids specified in *Inst.* 1.1–10 is designed to provide a continuous exegesis or *enarratio* of the biblical text. *Emendatio* is the special business of the scribes at Vivarium; to assist them, Cassiodorus compiled his

191 ‘The *grammaticus Latinus* had exactly the same teaching methods as his Greek prototype, with the same two features that had been characteristic of Hellenistic grammar—*methodicè, historicè*; i.e. the theory of good speech and the study of the classical poets, *recte loquendi scientiam et poetarum enarrationem*’: Marrou, *History of Education*, 275, citing Quintilian 1.9.1, 4.2 and *Grammatici Latini*, ed. Keil 4.486 (Servius). For full documentation see Kaster; Irvine.

192 Irvine, 68–78, 195–209. Cassiodorus’ omission of these ordinary terms of art from his own summary reflects the extent of his evacuation of the literary part of traditional grammar into the new science of ‘divine letters’. Book 1 of the *Institutions* nevertheless remains considerably more (as well as less) than a Christian *ars grammatica*.

digest *On Orthography*. His chapter on ‘The Excellence of Divine Scripture’ (1.16) is in essence a statement of the critical *iudicium* or evaluation on which his whole enterprise reposes, one that implicitly excludes the authors of the non-Christian literary ‘canon’ from consideration. Cassiodorus can still hold up Homer and Virgil as the poets par excellence of Greece and Rome (2.pref.4), and is free with quotations from the latter, whose works he had thoroughly absorbed as a young man. Similar, illustrative passages from Roman poets would appear scattered throughout the Vivarian *codex de grammatica*. But there is no further provision for the copying or study of integral texts of these authors. If classical Latin poetry had depended for its survival on the stewardship of Cassiodorus, it would have perished.

- rhetoric

The last key word in the chapter on grammar before its concluding bibliography is, perhaps not surprisingly, ‘orthography’. *Orthographia*, writes Cassiodorus, is ‘correctness of writing unspoiled by error, [which] puts the hand and the tongue in harmony’ (2.1.2). We have suggested that this formulation comes as close as any to catching the spirit of Book 1 of the *Institutiones* and indeed of the work as a whole. Where ancient grammar aimed to inculcate a personal verbal facility derived from study of an array of culturally and linguistically normative texts, Cassiodorus’ Christian pedagogy aimed at a perfection of speech that was nothing other than the recitation of the supremely (because divinely) eloquent text of Scripture by a reader whose attention to the letter of that text was as sharp as a well-trained scribe’s.¹⁹³ This definition amounts at the same time to a theory of Christian ‘rhetoric’; the line between classical grammar and rhetoric was similarly blurred. We might therefore expect that the chapter on rhetoric in *Inst.* 2 would also be largely pre-empted by *Inst.* 1, even were it to be read—as it was written—first. So it proves to be.

What we find, extracted for the most part from Cicero’s *De inventione* and the *Rhetoric* of the third-century writer Fortunatianus, is a summary of the classical system, with little visible reference to the needs of the new-style Christian reader. ‘The art of rhetoric, as the teachers of secular letters teach, is the knowledge of speaking effectively in civil cases’, Cassiodorus

193 Cf. Irvine, 204: ‘Cassiodorus affirms that, in an important sense, reading and writing are convertible terms: to read is to “produce” a text (*proferre*) from the script, to write means to have read correctly, to re-read. His readers are scribes and his scribes readers. The scribe, as both a reader and disseminator of writing, discloses the function of texts’ (citing *Orth.* pref., ed. Keil 143; *Inst.* 1.30.1).

begins (2.2.1). Of what use such an art could be to him, who was unlikely to be called upon in that capacity, the monastic reader would be left to wonder for several pages. An additional passage in recension *delta* at 2.2.3 calls attention to an instance of ‘demonstrative’ oratory in the Psalms, and the monk who was reading ‘On Secular Learning’ with the *Explanation of the Psalms* would be able to spot other points of contact, the more easily if he were using a copy of that work equipped with marginal index (see the translator’s notes for examples). So far as the object was to recognize rhetorical features of the Bible, the secular rhetoricians provided useful guidance. Rhetoric is reduced to a hermeneutical tool.

Not until almost the last paragraph of the chapter (2.2.16) does Cassiodorus identify any more active oratorical role for the Christian reader, and when he does so it is one closely compatible with prior definitions of the ideal scribe. He will ‘safeguard the memory of divine scripture’ (cf. the rhetorical faculty of *memoria*, which normally meant the recall of the matter and plan of a speech delivered without notes), ‘grasp the art of delivery in reciting the divine law’ (*pronuntiatio*), and ‘gain control of vocal quality in the chanting of the Psalter’ (*vox*). Memory and ‘pronunciation’ (i.e. delivery, *actio*) were the fourth and last elements in the classical sequence of *partes rhetoricae* (2.2.2). The first three—discovery of arguments (*inventio*), arrangement (*dispositio*), and style (*elocutio*)—survive in the Cassiodorian scheme only as accomplishments of the divine ‘author’ of the Bible. Like the fragments of Virgil in grammatical textbooks, the quotations from Cicero’s speeches at *Inst.* 2.2.13 are echoes of a human eloquence whose day had past.

- dialectic

Rhetoric and dialectic were closely associated in the ancient curriculum, as can be seen from the familiar comparison, attributed here to Varro, of the former to an open palm and the latter to a clenched fist (2.3.2). Just as in the analogy the fist appears first, then opens, so earlier Latin authors like Varro, Augustine and Martianus Capella habitually list dialectic before rhetoric. The reversal of order in Cassiodorus’ presentation may be due to a Greek source, and in any case reflects his uncertainty as to whether dialectic is properly an ‘art’ (as he takes both grammar and rhetoric to be) or a ‘discipline’. A first attempt at clarification is made at the point of transition between rhetoric and dialectic (2.2.17), where dialectic is said to be a discipline so far as it deals with apodeictic arguments, i.e. those that are necessarily true, and an art so far as it deals with arguments that are merely

probable.¹⁹⁴ A further attempt is made at the moment of passing from dialectic, now classed securely as an ‘art’ with grammar and rhetoric, to the four ‘disciplines’ or ‘sciences’ to which the three arts are said to be preliminary, namely arithmetic, music, geometry and astronomy (2.3.19, only in the two-book recension). Here in germ is the medieval distinction between the linguistic arts of the *trivium* and the mathematical sciences of the *quadrivium*.¹⁹⁵

In order to suggest that distinction, Cassiodorus is obliged to enter on an enumeration of the branches of philosophy (2.3.3–7) which interrupts his digest of dialectic and momentarily threatens to overwhelm an otherwise lightly burdened exposition. The basic division of philosophy into ‘theoretical’ and ‘practical’ aspects was common to both the Aristotelian and Platonic traditions; however, as recension *delta* states laconically at 2.3.4 (see apparatus to Mynors’ edition), the subsidiary details of Aristotle’s division ‘do not agree with Plato’. Undeterred, Cassiodorus sets out to combine the scheme of his Greek Aristotelian source with a Platonic framework derived from the prologue to Origen’s commentary on the Song of Songs, as translated by Rufinus (cf. *Inst.* 1.5.4).¹⁹⁶ In doing so, he equates Aristotelian ‘theoretical’ philosophy, which includes natural philosophy (i.e. physics) as well as the mathematical and theological sciences, with Origen’s ‘theoretical’ philosophy, which is the supreme science of theology, concerned exclusively with things beyond physical sense. Having cheerfully declared after Origen that ‘theoretical philosophy is that by which we go beyond the visible world to contemplate something of the divine and heavenly, and which we see only with the mind, since we have gone beyond corporeal sight’ (2.3.6), he ploughs on with a list of Aristotelian sub-species that contradicts and partly duplicates this primary definition. Had Cassiodorus been attempting a reprise of Augustine’s projected *Disciplinarum libri* with their ascent ‘from corporeal to incorporeal things, as if by certain steps’,¹⁹⁷ he would now have been in trouble. As it is, he can simply intone another

194 As explained by I. Hadot, 193–99, here and at 2.3.20, 22 Cassiodorus conflates different traditions of thought, two of which (Platonic and Stoic) made dialectic a science or discipline, while a third (Aristotelian) distinguished between *dialectic* as an art of making syllogisms out of probable arguments and *logic* as a science or discipline involving demonstrations (*apodeixeis*) that were necessarily true. Cassiodorus treats dialectic and logic as synonyms.

195 I. Hadot, 196, 199, tracing the distinction to Aristotle’s *Nicomachean Ethics*, probably as transmitted by a commentator on Porphyry’s *Isagoge*.

196 Mair, ‘Manual for Monks’; I. Hadot, 299–301. See also D’Elia, ‘Sensa e dimensione’.

197 Above n. 175.

version of his theory of contemplation (2.3.22) and then, apparently without any sense of inconsequence, launch into a resolutely pedestrian epitome of the mathematical sciences. By the 580s, his confidence in the secular sciences as modes of access to divine truth seems to have been somewhat tempered. Plato and Aristotle might claim that ‘disciplines’ dealt with things as they necessarily were, but—Cassiodorus now adds—‘only divine letters cannot deceive, for they hold the unmovable personal authority of truth’ (2.3.20). The revision is in keeping with the strictly scriptural contemplative science set out in Book 1.

Even when trimmed of its prologue and epilogue, the chapter on dialectic is the longest in the book. Its relevance to monastic biblical studies is entirely implicit but, such as it is, amply borne out by the cross-references that can be made to the *Explanation of the Psalms* (see the translator’s notes).¹⁹⁸ As in the chapter on rhetoric, there is a moment immediately before the bibliography when Cassiodorus pauses to reflect on the use of what has been imparted—in this case, specifically, knowledge of ‘commonplaces’ (*topica, loci communes*). Aptly, it is the ‘commonness’ of this resource that strikes him: ‘Remember that commonplaces indeed offer arguments commonly (*communiter*) to orators, dialecticians, poets, and lawyers... Really a remarkable kind of work, to be able to bring together whatever the versatility and variety of the human intellect displays in its search for meaning...’ (2.3.17). Fleetingly but distinctly we catch the voice of the author of the thirteen-book *Variae*, that tour de force of ‘topical’ argument with coda on the discursive powers of the human soul. Again it would be interesting to know how these faculties were to be deployed by monks, but Cassiodorus is not to be drawn. Instead, he lists the extensive collection of dialectical texts that he has laid up (2.3.18). The list underwent major revision between the early and later recensions of the book; in the later version, a distinction is made between a codex containing ‘primary’ texts either written in or translated into Latin (Porphyry, Aristotle, Cicero, etc.) and a series of separately bound commentaries on the same. A syllabus like the one described by Cassiodorus was to be used for the study of logic in the West until the rediscovery of the full range of Aristotle’s works on this subject in the twelfth century.¹⁹⁹

198 Walsh, ‘Cassiodorus Teaches Logic’.

199 I. Hadot, 205–06.

- arithmetic, music, geometry, astronomy

The arts of the future *trivium* were the ones that had made Cassiodorus' career as a Romano-Gothic civil servant. As arts of language, they were also the ones most applicable to a Christian pedagogy dedicated to the preservation, dissemination and interpretation of the biblical text. Once Cassiodorus moves beyond them, there is little immediately at stake.²⁰⁰ In other hands—those of the younger Augustine, say, or the author of the *Consolation of Philosophy* (a work never cited in *Institutions*)—even a cursory review of the mathematical sciences might have lent substance to the airy claims for contemplative theory made at *Inst.* 2.3.6 and reiterated (not for the last time) at 2.3.22. As handled by Cassiodorus, however, these disciplines appear mainly as embellishments of Christian learning. After the discreet Christian Pythagoreanism of its preamble (2.4.1), the chapter on arithmetic in the earlier recension proceeds uninterrupted by any speculative thought until its close, at which point Cassiodorus throws in some general reflections on the human experience of life in time (2.4.7). Revising the book for inclusion in the *Institutions*, he added a short excursus on biblical numerology from one to seven (2.4.8). And so to music (2.5). There the Christian bibliography was richer, and included an ambitious work of Augustine's (2.5.10), but it leaves only the lightest marks in our author's text.²⁰¹ And so to geometry (2.6). God himself, ventures Cassiodorus, is a geometer (2.5.11), but the insight turns out to be worth nothing. The final chapter opens with a few biblical examples of God's power to subvert the astronomical law of his own universe,²⁰² and ends with a statutory warning against astrological fortune-telling. One has only to turn back to Book 2 of Augustine's *On Christian Teaching*, as Cassiodorus did (2.7.4), to see how much more consequentially the same subject matter could be related to issues of Christian 'biblical' culture. As far as Cassiodorus is concerned, however, there is nothing left to prove. 'Now that we have completed the discussion of secular teaching', he concludes in the revised version of this chapter, 'it is clear that these disciplines bring considerable usefulness to our understanding of divine law...' (*ibid.*). Q.E.D.

200 On the sources for Cassiodorus' treatment of the quadrivium see Pizzani.

201 See also *Var.* **II.40** for a disquisition on human and divine harmonies, in a letter from King Theoderic to Boethius (506) à propos of a request from Clovis, king of the Franks, for a lyre-player be sent from Italy (*Var.* **II.41.3**).

202 Cf. *Var.* **XII.25.5**, an astrological explanation for the mysterious 'darkening' and disturbance of the seasons in 536.

• conclusion

The last section of Book 2 is unique to the two-book *Institutions*.²⁰³ It opens with a fresh prospect, now partly retrospective, of the ascending *ordo disciplinarum*, repeats the caution against astrology, and strikes a final balance between ‘secular’ and ‘divine’ readings by making a pronounced movement towards the latter. ‘As blessed Augustine and other most learned fathers say, secular writings (*scripturae saeculares*) should not be rejected’—but a stronger imperative is expressed by the Psalmist: ‘to meditate on the law [i.e. the Scripture] day and night’ (2.concl.3; cf. 1.32.4). That is the last that we hear of secular texts. In his peroration, Cassiodorus turns to the end-book of the Christian Bible and a preview of the visions there promised. For a fuller understanding of the future vision of God, so far as it can be anticipated on the basis of the sacred text, he refers to a treatise by Augustine (2.concl.9). He then quotes one of that writer’s favourite Gospel verses, routinely applied by Augustine to the process of understanding Scripture itself: ‘Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and you shall find; knock, and it shall be opened to you.’ In the end, Cassiodorus’ sense of bibliographical measure, or what he calls the *modus librorum* (cf. 2.pref.4), prevails. Any reader who thinks that these two books of *Institutions* have gone on too long should consider the books of Genesis and Exodus... and they will begin to seem short. Having reached the textual limit of the scriptural revelation, the Vivarian *enkyklios paideia* thus returns to its beginning. In theory, as to a surprising degree also in practice, bibliographical measure is biblical measure, a *modus librorum* at once physically fixed in nine ‘codices’ and inexhaustible this side of the Second Coming. It is fitting that the instruction to scribes at the end of the text of the *Institutions* in the Bamberg manuscript²⁰⁴ requires the same textual fidelity as Revelation 22: 18–19.

*

As an attempt at *codification*—more or less literally, the encompassing of diverse but related materials within a single book (codex), corpus or collection—the *Institutions* takes its place between the *Variae* and the last catalogue of the ‘complete works of Cassiodorus’ in the *Orthography*. How successful it was as such requires separate, partly historical consideration.²⁰⁵

203 In other words, it had no place in the separate treatise ‘On Secular Learning’ and would not be transmitted in the *delta* and *phi* recensions which account for much of the medieval tradition of this part of the work.

204 Above n. 113.

205 Below pp. 79ff.

As the preceding analysis has shown, Cassiodorus' yoking of his thirty-three chapters on divine letters with his seven on human does not occur without sleight of hand or occasional minor violence to his subject matter. Even as the last of many ablative-absolute constructions of the type 'Those things having been done that we said we would do...' is brought to bear at the beginning of the conclusion to Book 2, in conclusion of the whole, there may be some doubt in the reader's mind whether the rhetorical clasp will hold the bursting covers of these two books together. We know that it did not,²⁰⁶ and that in most places for most of the time between the eighth and fifteenth centuries the treatises 'On Divine Learning' and 'On Secular Learning' circulated apart. That does not mean that the attempt to reconcile the two kinds of knowledge was doomed from the start, or that the work's reception frustrated its author's purposes. After all, Cassiodorus himself seems to have believed that his treatise 'On Secular Learning' could serve a useful purpose without Book 1 of the *Institutions*, and we shall find ample evidence of other uses of his work that he would have approved. Rather than asking why Cassiodorus' project failed, we may need to explain how it generally succeeded so well in spite of the manifest weaknesses of its execution.

The long-term appeal of Cassiodorus' double enterprise of Christian learning can be accounted for as a product of factors both practical and ideological. In practical terms, the *Institutions* worked or could be made to work. Even in the absence of the particular collection of books that Cassiodorus created for his monks at Vivarium, the plan of biblical scholarship outlined in Book 1 would still be effective. Its underlying idea—that the sacred text, once (!) safely transmitted, should be enveloped in a mesh of patristic commentary, supplemented where necessary by later writings in the same spirit—was the rationale for an activity of text-production, study and learned exegesis that was to be carried on throughout the monasteries of western Christendom down to the end of the so-called middle ages, and frequently revived in more recent times both inside and outside the cloister. Although that idea was not the solitary brainchild of Cassiodorus, but rather the collective work of several generations beginning in the time of Jerome and Augustine, no other Latin (or for that matter Greek) writer of late antiquity set it out with anything like the clarity and system he achieved. That he did not have to claim it as his own was an important part of its attractiveness. Chief among ideological reasons for the relatively good fortune of the *Institutions* must have been its ostentatiously *traditional*

206 Cf. Holtz, 'Quelques aspects', 285ff.

character.²⁰⁷ Both books had the sanction of ‘blessed Augustine and other most learned fathers’. With the tools and instincts of modern historical and source-critical scholarship, we see how skilfully and speciously Cassiodorus attached this general patristic blessing, but few readers before Erasmus would have shared our scruples.

Perhaps most startling to Augustine, had he seen it, would have been the manner in which Cassiodorus conjoined biblical learning with a largely unreconstructed cycle of secular liberal arts or disciplines. Here again, we should neither over- nor underestimate our author’s originality. Cassiodorus did not invent the scheme of seven disciplines, which had been in the air for several centuries by his time. He did, however, give it a set of explicitly Christian coordinates that it had not had before, both in his disciplinary indexing of the *Explanation of the Psalms* and in the final architecture of his two-book *Institutions*. He was at liberty to do this because ‘pagan’ intellectual culture, as a whole, could no longer be perceived as a threat to Christianity. It was thus possible to repackage that culture in a way that was convenient and acceptable to Christians. To a large extent, as we have seen, the parts of the ordinary late classical curriculum that were the most practically necessary for Christian biblical pedagogy—namely grammar and rhetoric—had already been selectively assimilated into a quasi-autonomous sphere of ‘divine letters’, together with certain elements of history and geography. That much Augustine would have understood and approved.²⁰⁸ Why then did Cassiodorus do as he did, and take the further steps of restoring grammar and rhetoric as freestanding components of a non-Christian syllabus and providing in like manner for dialectic, arithmetic, geometry, music and astronomy, with (it would seem) ever less practical utility and greater risk of superfluity? If necessity and convenience no longer dictated, what other advantages could have been in view?

It is nowadays generally agreed that Cassiodorus had no thought of ‘saving classical culture’. (The terms of the proposition are wildly anachronistic.) He was, however, of a visibly *conservative* disposition, inclined to uphold the traditions of his class and education even in changed circumstances. His amphibiously seigneurial-monastic establishment at Squillace is evidence of that.²⁰⁹ It is also clear—to judge from the *Variae* and other

207 For the similar appeal of the *Exp.Ps.* to Bede see Meyvaert, ‘Bede, Cassiodorus’, 827–28, “‘In the Footsteps of the Fathers’”, 282–84.

208 See esp. *Doct.chr.* 2.19.29ff., from which the terms of discussion in this paragraph are partly derived.

209 Barnish, ‘Work of Cassiodorus’, 180.

works from before the time of his conversion—that he had a taste for abstruse and curious learning, of a kind common to those of his formation in the later Roman empire.²¹⁰ To such a man, the authors and texts of the ‘liberal arts’, however vaguely conceived, constituted a patrimony. They were what was left to him of his non-religious inheritance after the rest of the ancient (or not so ancient) ‘Order of His House’ had been dismantled. By collecting these precious materials in the heptad of Book 2 of the *Institutions* Cassiodorus was able to garner for his new-but-traditional Christian education a share of the glories that still attached to the names of Pythagoras, Plato, Aristotle, Euclid, Ptolemy, Varro and Cicero, while also paying tribute to later Latin worthies such as Apuleius (!), Marius Victorinus and Boethius. The seven liberal arts as Cassiodorus presented them to his Christian readers would have made an intellectual ensemble that was safe, self-contained, moderately awe-inspiring, practical where necessary, and—compared with the late antique Greek philosophical curriculum on which his scheme is partly parasitic—not too intellectually challenging. As much for its modesty as for its ambition it was a considerable legacy.

Reception and Historical Significance

Cassiodorus must have died not long after the final redaction of the *Orthography* in his ‘ninety-third year’. He left no notable disciples, and his monastic foundation at Squillace does not seem to have survived him by more than a generation or two.²¹¹ In the absence of any continuous local tradition of ‘Cassiodorian’ monasticism, the future of the initiatives taken in the *Institutions* and related works would depend on the wider diffusion of the schemes of learning contained in those texts and the influence of the bibliographic models associated with them. As we have seen, the literary oeuvre of Cassiodorus invites study as a synthesis and selective articulation of tendencies already manifest in the work of earlier Christian teachers; this retrospective dimension is a large part of its interest. It can also serve as an exceptional indicator of currents of thought and practice in certain milieux

210 For the profile of a nearly contemporary Italian ‘gentleman of the church’, with instincts very similar to Cassiodorus’, see now Kennell’s study of Ennodius (474–521), esp. ch. 2 (‘The Divinity of Letters’).

211 On the meagre evidence relating to the monastery after c.590, see O’Donnell, *Cassiodorus*, 196–98, 234, now with Cuppo Csaki, ‘*Contra voluntatem fundatorum*’, and Troncarelli, *Vivarium*, 84–90 (inferences from surviving MSS). Courcelle, ‘Nouvelles Recherches’, gives an account of a sarcophagus dug up at the site in 1952, possibly that of Cassiodorus.

in sixth-century Italy, for which other sources are less transparent. For those reasons alone, Cassiodorus' work has a strong claim on our historical attention. Yet it will obviously acquire further significance if it can be shown to have been formative for later generations as well. How instrumental were the *Institutions* in shaping the Christian Latin culture of the medieval West? Scholarly opinion has wavered on this point. A review of the main positions taken over the past century will help frame the present state of research.²¹²

Founding Narratives

For a long time after the appearance of the first printed and 'critical' editions of his writings in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, Cassiodorus enjoyed acclaim as the pioneer of a style of intellectual life whose glorious future enfolded the present generation of (Christian, humanist) scholars and editors.²¹³ It is with the gradual unsettling of this modern nostalgia that the current chapter of inquiry begins.

In an essay on 'The New [Christian] Education' in his influential *Founders of the Middle Ages* (1928), Rand distinguished between what he took to be the liberal, humanist monasticism of Jerome and 'the far less pleasing sort' proposed by John Cassian. In the sixth-century Rule of St Benedict, he lamented, 'there seems to be no provision for the cultivation of the liberal arts that in St Jerome's programme [sic] led up to the sacred studies'. In Rand's account it fell to Cassiodorus to restore the balance of a Christian education. Had he and Pope Agapit succeeded in founding a 'university' at Rome 'it would have closely resembled Harvard College in the old days'! In the event it was the *Institutions* that provided the blueprint for a humanely Christian culture. Glossing the praise of scribes at *Inst.* 1.30, Rand writes: 'Cassiodorus is speaking here of copies of the Bible; but this plan made necessary the transcribing of the heathen authors as well... To [it] we owe, in large part, the preservation of such works as we have of Classical

212 For a chronological digest of major scholarship on Cassiodorus to 1975, see Momigliano, 'Cassiodoro', 503–04. More recent bibliography is chronicled in the annual issues of *L'année philologique* and *Medioevo Latino*. The following pages expand the sketch by O'Donnell, *Cassiodorus*, 253–55.

213 Mynors, xlix–lii, describes the early printing-history of the *Institutions*, which culminated in the *Opera omnia* of Cassiodorus edited by the Benedictine monk Jean Gareit (Rouen, 1679; repr. Venice 1729 and in *PL* 69–70). As remarked by Momigliano, 'Cassiodoro', 502, 'The Benedictines of St Maur [the congregation that took on the task of editing major patristic authors] naturally found Cassiodorus to their taste and even presented him as a Benedictine'. The details of this misprision are set out by K. Zelzer. See also below pp. 88f.

Latin literature today.’²¹⁴ Rand thus gave a new lease of life to a longstanding notion of Cassiodorus as guardian of the classics and architect of medieval Christian humanism.²¹⁵ Curtius, who took his cue for *European Literature and the Latin Middle Ages* from *Founders of the Middle Ages*, would credit the master of Vivarium with the ‘sanctification’ of the liberal arts and describe the *Institutions* as ‘a basic book of medieval culture’.²¹⁶

Rand assumed without argument (1) that the programme of the *Institutions* was favourable to ‘classical literature’ including the poets, and (2) that the work of Cassiodorus had a profound impact on medieval Latin culture. In fact, the researches of Lehmann had already made the second premise less secure.²¹⁷ That much was conceded by Laistner in his *Thought and Letters in Western Europe A.D. 500 to 900* (1931). Laistner spoke like Rand of the ‘obvious debt of posterity’ to Cassiodorus for ‘the preservation of ancient writings, sacred and profane’ and stressed ‘the importance of [his] life-work’ as an example to later generations of monks. ‘Yet,’ he went on, ‘the fate of Cassiodorus’s own works during the earlier Middle Ages is curious and still in part unexplained.’ Particularly puzzling was the seeming neglect in later periods of Book 1 of the *Institutions*.²¹⁸

The revisionist case was uncompromisingly stated by Thiele in 1932. Cassiodorus could no longer be considered the ‘founder’ of scholarly monasticism in the West, nor were his works an important source for the Carolingian revival.²¹⁹ Several kinds of evidence pointed to these conclusions.

214 Rand, *Founders of the Middle Ages*, 244.

215 He cites a footnote from *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* in which Gibbon states that ‘Cassiodorus... allowed an ample scope for the studies of the monks; and we shall not be scandalized, if their pens sometimes wandered from Chrysostom and Augustin to Homer and Virgil.’ Rand objects: ‘Gibbon insinuates that the copying of the Classics was a kind of transgression, into which the monks were tempted now and then. On the contrary, it was a regular part of their task; for the study of the Pagan authors was ingrained in the scheme of monastic discipline as established by Cassiodorus’ (*Founders of the Middle Ages*, 247).

216 Curtius, 448–50, 22–23; cf. 597 (influence of Rand).

217 Following the lead of his teacher, the great palaeographer and historian of medieval Latin bibliographic culture, Ludwig Traube, Lehmann had once hoped to demonstrate the role of Cassiodorus in ‘the survival of antiquity and the history of scholarship’ but found it awkward ‘that we know so little of the effects of the work of the founder of Vivarium and his immediate disciples’ (65). His researches into the influence of Cassiodorus’ works on Isidore, Bede and Alcuin, in his ‘Cassiodorstudien’ (1912–18), cast serious doubt on the prior consensus.

218 Laistner, *Thought and Letters in Western Europe* (1931), 73–74; see also his review of Curtius in Laistner, *Intellectual Heritage*, 83–89, originally published in *Speculum* 24 (1949): 259–63.

219 H. Thiele, 401–19 (‘The Significance of Vivarium and Cassiodorus for the Learned Culture of the Middle Ages’).

The combination of ‘profane’ and ‘sacred’ learning practised by Irish and Anglo-Saxon monks of the seventh and eighth centuries did not depend on Vivarian models. Isidore of Seville exploited Book 2 of the *Institutions* for his *Etymologies* but never cited the work or its author by name. Bede knew the *Explanation of the Psalms* but not the *Institutions*. When Carolingian authors such as Alcuin, Hrabanus Maurus and Hincmar of Reims used the *Institutions*, which was not often, they did so without appealing to it on matters of principle; when they needed to justify the study of classical writers as a basis for the study of Scripture, they referred directly to Augustine. Only once did anyone take *Inst.* 1 as the model for a handbook of biblical and patristic studies, and the work in question was not widely diffused.²²⁰ The cult of Cassiodorus was less a medieval than a modern affair, datable from the moment ‘when medieval Latin philology began to bloom’—that is, to the time of Mabillon and his fellow Benedictines of St Maur, among whom was Garet, editor of Cassiodorus.²²¹

Near the end of his dissertation Thiele referred to Traube’s view that the collections of biblical, patristic and classical texts assembled by Cassiodorus were an important source for the medieval manuscript traditions of the works that they contained. This opinion had been reinforced by Beer (1911), who supposed that the Vivarian library was transferred in the early seventh century to the northern Italian monastery of Bobbio (founded by the Irishman Columbanus in 612), which then served as a centre for the dissemination of copies across Europe. ‘How large a part was actually played by Vivarium in the transmission of manuscripts to the Middle Ages is hard to say,’ Thiele commented.²²² Although Beer’s theory shortly fell out of favour,²²³ the

220 A treatise in three books ‘On the Expositors of the Divine Law and the Authors to be Read by Christians’, probably from the ninth or tenth century, survives in a single Beneventan manuscript of the eleventh, edited by Lehmann, 66–81.

221 H. Thiele, 419; see above n. 213. The psychogenesis of the modern ‘vulgate opinion’ of Cassiodorus has been plausibly explained by O’Donnell, *Cassiodorus*, 252: ‘The superficial reader of the *Institutiones* would notice that there was apparently equal treatment of secular and sacred sciences... and would find a chapter in the first book devoted to the science of copying manuscripts. That chapter in particular would warm the hearts of paleographers and textual critics wishing later medieval scribes had been so well-instructed; those factors combined in minds desirous of finding a little classical humanism in the long gap between the last pagan aristocrats and the Carolingian Renaissance...’ and the Cassiodorus of modern scholarly legend was born.

222 H. Thiele, 417.

223 The main work of discrediting it was done by Mercati; see also Lowe in *CLA* 4.xxvi–xxvii.

hypothesis of Vivarian exemplars for certain texts and assemblages of texts in their medieval traditions was not abandoned. Indeed, it was soon put on a new basis by Courcelle, during a mid-century renaissance of Cassiodorian studies that was to set the limits for most scholarship on the *Institutions* down to the present day.

Out of the Shadow of St Benedict: The 'New' Cassiodorus

Alongside Courcelle, the leading lights of this renaissance were van de Vyver and Mynors. Van de Vyver's 1931 article offered an admirably clear-sighted assessment of Cassiodorus' double life's work as Roman politician and Christian educator. Already its first sentence pointed to the historiographical problem of the monastery at Vivarium, 'whose role in the transmission of the ancient heritage... we are not yet in a position to determine'.²²⁴ Dismissing the claims sometimes made for the *Institutions* as a brief for the Christian study of pagan poetry, van de Vyver insisted instead on the work's originality as a manual of biblical learning in the spirit of Augustine's *Christian Teaching*: 'To commit monks to the systematic study of Scripture... was a very remarkable enterprise. We know of no-one else at this date in the West who accomplished it with such method and such a broad appeal to the profane sciences.'²²⁵ In agreement with Traube, but on the strength of new research, van de Vyver underlined Cassiodorus' initiative in compiling unified *corpora* of texts according to discipline or subject matter.²²⁶ He also presented fresh evidence for the reception of an interpolated form of the treatise 'On Secular Learning', though in this area his findings were largely eclipsed by Mynors' 1937 edition of the *Institutions*.

As his preface explained, Mynors provided for the first time 'a critical text based on the manuscript tradition as a whole'.²²⁷ His survey of the manuscripts would be sufficient to justify his edition, but he had not attempted a 'history of the transmission illustrated from palaeography and from the literature of succeeding centuries'. Nor had he ventured 'to annotate an

²²⁴ Van de Vyver, 'Cassiodore et son oeuvre', 244.

²²⁵ *Ibid.* 279.

²²⁶ *Ibid.* 275–77, citing van de Vyver, 'Étapes de développement'.

²²⁷ Mynors seems to have been directed to the *Institutions* by his Oxford mentor C.H. Turner, a specialist in early Latin collections of canon law, who himself once planned to edit Cassiodorus' treatise together with Jerome–Gennadius, *On Famous Men* and Gennadius' summary of Catholic theology, the *De ecclesiasticis dogmatibus*. Such a triple edition in one volume would have been both Cassiodorian and broadly consistent with the later medieval tradition of ortho-bibliographical compendia.

author who sits on the threshold between two Ages, and looks before and after'. His *editio minor* would perhaps 'enable some competent scholar to produce the annotated edition, which a work so full of interest richly deserves'.²²⁸ Sixty-five years on, the comprehensive history of the transmission of the *Institutions* and the annotated edition both remain desiderata. (L.W. Jones's 1946 English edition, though serviceable as a translation and as a summary of scholarship before Courcelle, made no major scholarly advance.)

Mynors' study of the manuscript tradition of the *Institutions* was immediately illuminating. His account of the different recensions of 'Book 2' opened the way for the detailed treatment of a text-historical problem that is crucial to any assessment of the role of Cassiodorus' treatise 'On Secular Learning' in the propagation of a liberal arts curriculum.²²⁹ Just as revealing, because fuller than any before available, was his presentation of the tradition in which Book 1 appears as part of an ensemble of guides to early Christian literature, an arrangement which 'recall[s] the collections formed by the author for the instruction of his own monks'.²³⁰ In an *index auctorum* at the end of his edition Mynors listed all the authors and works referred to in the *Institutions* 'as a provisional indication of the contents of the library at Vivarium'. The list has been faulted for confusing (a) the real library of the monastery with (b) the virtual universe of texts in which Cassiodorus wished his monks to move and (c) his own literary experience. Yet it undoubtedly hastened the making of these necessary distinctions.

No scholar was ever better equipped to undertake a comprehensive historical study of Cassiodorus' *Institutions* in relation to prior and subsequent traditions of literate and liberal learning than Courcelle. The absence of such a work from his pen, apparently forestalled by the publication of Mynors' edition,²³¹ still haunts anyone who treads this ground. Aside from several important articles, Courcelle's chief contribution to Cassiodorian studies

228 Mynors, [vii], liii.

229 Mynors, xviii–xxxix, followed by van de Vyver, '*Institutiones*', 59–76, and Courcelle, '*Histoire d'un brouillon*'. For subsequent discussion see the references given above p. 39.

230 Mynors, xii–xvi, xxxix–xlix, here xxxix. The oldest extant member of this class of manuscripts is Hereford Cathedral Library O.III.2 (=H), a Carolingian MS of the ninth century said by Mynors to be 'descended from a MS. in insular minuscule' (xv). A later branch of the tradition is represented by a number of MSS of the twelfth centuries, 'all descended from H or a sister-book' (xlvi), many of them now or formerly in English libraries. The potential function of *Inst.* as a bibliographical guide is picked up by Rand, 'New Cassiodorus', 436–38 in his appreciation of Mynors' edition. On the role of *Inst.* 1 as a bibliographic tool in medieval England see now Webber, 34–37.

231 O'Donnell, *Cassiodorus*, 254 with reference.

took the form of two long chapters in his book on Greek scholarship in the West between the fourth and sixth centuries, first published in 1943. The first of these contains his pioneering analysis of the sources for Cassiodorus' digest of the liberal arts in *Inst.* 2.²³² The second began by asking 'If the library at Vivarium was dispersed, is it not possible to find survivals from the wreckage?'²³³ In exploring this possibility, Courcelle first reviewed and rejected the arguments made by Beer and others for the wholesale transfer of Vivarian manuscripts to Bobbio in the seventh century. He next considered what criteria should be applied in determining whether a given manuscript represented a 'Cassiodorian tradition' or, in rarer cases, was 'of Vivarian provenance'. Judging that palaeographical and other 'external' indicators would by themselves usually be inconclusive,²³⁴ he drew attention to two classes of Cassiodorian manuscript recognizable on 'internal' grounds, that is, according to their contents: *corpora* containing two or more texts in a combination specified in the *Institutions*, and works composed or commissioned by Cassiodorus himself. He then isolated six extant manuscripts which met one or more of his criteria, beginning with the famous Codex Amiatinus, a copy of the Vulgate written and illuminated at Bede's monastery of Wearmouth-Jarrow c.700 and widely considered (primarily on external grounds) to be modelled after Cassiodorus' *codex grandior*.²³⁵ Finally, by collating what was known or conjectured about the fates of the *codex grandior* and five other 'unquestionably Vivarian manuscripts' thus identified, all of which presented *corpora* of ecclesiastical texts, Courcelle was able to point to the papal library of the Lateran in Rome in the seventh century as the common origin of dispersal. He concluded that 'contrary to the hitherto held view... Cassiodorus' influence was more weighty for the preservation of Christian literature than for that of the profane writers'.²³⁶ The only non-ecclesiastical Vivarian *corpus* he had been able to trace was one of medical texts (*Inst.* 1.31).

Courcelle's chapter on 'Vivarian manuscripts' represents a summit of modern research on the early medieval afterlife of Cassiodorian models of Christian learning. The completion of Lowe's survey of pre-800 Latin manuscripts in Italian libraries brought some corrections;²³⁷ otherwise,

232 Courcelle, *Late Latin Writers*, 339–54. See also above pp. 65–66.

233 *Ibid.* 362.

234 A judgment now to be reconsidered in the light of research by Troncarelli: below pp. 95f.

235 Courcelle, *Late Latin Writers*, 376–82; for the *codex grandior* see above pp. 52–53.

236 *Ibid.* 401.

237 See H. Bloch in *Speculum* 25 (1950): 282–87.

Courcelle's theses stood largely unchallenged, and undeveloped. 'The new avenue opened by M. Courcelle will surely lead far; it is too soon to say what its end-point will be,' wrote Cappuyns in a 1949 encyclopaedia article which usefully consolidated the gains of recent scholarship. A few pages later, he expressed similar hopes for future research into the Cassiodorian readings of Isidore of Seville, Bede, Alcuin, and other authors of later periods.²³⁸ With a few important exceptions, however, the horizon of knowledge on these subjects would remain static for some time.²³⁹ Study of manuscript traditions and the teasing out of sources and influences from parallel texts, exemplified for the *Institutions* by Lehmann, Mynors and Courcelle, yielded at mid-century to a new wave of larger-scale narratives, successors in their fashion to Rand's *Founders of the Middle Ages*. Textual history was put into the service of a history of the ideals and institutions of *education* and *monasticism* in the post-Roman West.

The framework and much of the impetus for this new historiography were provided by Marrou's 1938 study of Augustine and the 'end of ancient culture' (reissued with an important *retractatio* or postscript in 1949) and the same author's *History of Education in Antiquity* (1948). Marrou was initially disposed to see Augustine's writings, especially his *Christian Teaching*, as marking a salutary break with 'decadent' classical traditions and inaugurating the Bible-centred Christian culture of the Latin Middle Ages. By 1948 he had modified his narrative. No longer just an exceptionally clear-headed *homme de la décadence*, Augustine now stood for a distinctly 'late antique' intellectual-religious culture, one that would endure for centuries in the East but be cut short in the West by the fifth-century invasions and subsequent collapse of Roman public institutions. The effect of this historiographic revision was dramatically to lower Augustine's value as an explanation for

²³⁸ Cappuyns, 1398, 1402.

²³⁹ The chief exception is Isidore of Seville. For the use of Cassiodorus' writings on grammar and rhetoric in the first two books of that author's *Origines* or *Etymologiae*, see the corresponding sections of Fontaine, *Isidore de Séville*; borrowings are noted in the apparatus of the new edition of Isidore's work published by 'Les Belles Lettres'. Note also Fontaine, 'Fins et moyens', 151, calling for 'research into the influence exercised by other chapters of the *Institutions* on the letter and spirit of Isidore's ecclesiastical instruction'; 'Cassiodore et Isidore'; 'Relecture isidorienne'. The caution against Cassiodorus' style of Christian literary study sounded in a famous letter of Pope Gregory to Isidore's brother Leander of Seville is further discussed by Riché, 152–54; Holtz, 'Quelques aspects', 286–89; 'Contexte grammaticale'; Markus, *Gregory the Great*, 36–37. Gorman, 'Diagrams', 41, comments on Isidore's use of the diagrams in the *Institutions*. On Bede's knowledge of Cassiodorus see now Meyvaert, 'Bede, Cassiodorus'.

cultural change. While the principles expounded in works like *Christian Teaching* might be assimilated in a later synthesis, they could not have produced it. The shaping ideology and institutions of an emergent 'medieval' culture were to be sought elsewhere, outside the metropolitan milieux inhabited by Augustine and other classically educated bishops of the fourth and early fifth centuries—in the monasteries of the Egyptian desert.²⁴⁰ The penultimate chapter of the *History of Education in Antiquity* posits a new site for the 'end of ancient culture': 'In the fourth century... there appeared a type of Christian school that was wholly devoted to religion and had none of the features of the old classical school; already medieval and not classical in its inspiration, it remained for a long time peculiar to its own environment and had little outside influence. *This was the monastic school.*'²⁴¹

In neither version of Marrou's history of the transition from ancient to medieval intellectual culture does Cassiodorus play a conspicuous part. In his 1938 thesis on Augustine, the project of a Christian academy at Rome and the foundation at Vivarium appear as equal failures in the long term, while the *Institutions* is credited with transmitting to the Middle Ages 'the last glimmers of a civilization in the process of extinguishing itself'.²⁴² In the 1948 *History of Education* the section on 'The Monastic School in the West' closes with the *Rule of Benedict*; Cassiodorus is ushered in under the inauspicious rubric of 'The Lombard Invasion', where a paragraph devoted to his pedagogical enterprise ends by citing the *Institutions* as evidence of a 'remarkable attempt [sic] at monastic culture'. Again the future belonged to someone else, this time Gregory the Great.²⁴³ As a corrective to easy assumptions about Cassiodorus' role as a 'founder of the middle ages' Marrou's reticence was timely. But it also smacks of *parti pris*. It failed to give proper weight to Courcelle's recent work. And it betrayed the author's aversion to the kind of literary-mechanical competence prescribed and even exalted by Cassiodorus. 'Was I mistaken,' Marrou asks as he turns from classical to Christian subjects, 'when... I suggested that the old education was to develop into a culture dominated by scribes?'²⁴⁴ Gratifying as the

240 See esp. Marrou, *Saint Augustin et la fin* (1949), 'Retractatio', 690–702; Vessey, 'Demise', 383–91.

241 Marrou, *History of Education*, 330 (emphasis added). Cf. Marrou, 'École de l'Antiquité tardive', 139–43, for the same historical caesura.

242 Marrou, *Saint Augustin et la fin*, 401, 413.

243 Marrou, *History of Education*, 347.

244 *Ibid.* 313 (emphasis added), aptly cited by Stansbury, 81 n. 142, to underline '[t]he change in the Roman educational system from producing *virī eloquentissimi* to *notarii peritissimi*'.

Institutions ought to have been as confirmation of this insight, it afforded little comfort to a twentieth-century Catholic humanist in quest of inspiring precedents. Concluding his *History of Education in Antiquity* with an unsubstantiated assertion of the continuity between ‘medieval Christianity’ and ‘the old Classicism’, Marrou gestured to ‘old Roman libraries’ as a source for the renewal of learning in Anglo-Saxon England and hence for the Carolingian revival, without considering Courcelle’s hypothesis of the Vivarian provenance of some of the volumes in those libraries or the evidence for their chiefly ecclesiastical (as opposed to classical) contents.²⁴⁵

Pillar of medieval humanism or last bastion of a world in ruins? Founder of learned monasticism or a lone scribe crying in the wilderness? The fortunes of Cassiodorus had become uncertain. With faith in old tales of origin waning and research into new histories of transmission incomplete, scholars placed their bets. From now on, much of the smart money went on Benedict and Gregory.

In the year that Marrou published his *History of Education in Antiquity* Bardy gave a much larger place to Cassiodorus in a popular but disabused account of Christian culture between the fourth and sixth centuries. His last chapter (‘The Silence of the Cloister’) is a diptych composed of portraits of Benedict and Cassiodorus. Bardy is careful to mark both their affinities and their differences. For him, the defining characteristic of Vivarium lay ‘in intellectual labour and study, in what we might call a Benedictinism *avant la lettre*, understanding this term in the restricted sense it has acquired since the seventeenth century and the scholarly exertions of the monks of the [Benedictine] reform of St Maur’.²⁴⁶ This is a vital distinction. Cassiodorus was no disciple of Benedict but his values did partly anticipate those of humanistically minded scholars of the Catholic Counter-Reformation. The intervening eleven centuries were beyond the scope of Bardy’s study, which stops on the threshold of the ‘new world’... announced by Pope Gregory. Cassiodorus ‘the last Roman’ served him, as he would others, as a convenient book-end.

The decision to leave Cassiodorus behind as a man of the past is even more deliberate in Leclercq’s study of medieval monastic culture (1957), which has become a minor classic. In order to plot a continuous tradition of ‘literary’ or ‘learned’ monasticism from western beginnings to the present day, Leclercq collapsed all distinctions of Benedictinism before *and* after the letter. His project was to describe ‘the genesis, the development, and the

245 Marrou, *History of Education*, 349–50.

246 Bardy, *L’Église et les derniers romains*, 245. For a similarly judicious assessment, around the same time, see Löwe, esp. 437–42.

constants in the cultural current which links St Benedict to St Bernard and to his sons'.²⁴⁷ The two primary constants were 'the study of letters' (interpreted as broadly as context permitted and thesis required) and 'the search for God'. Relative emphases varied, but '[w]hen St Bernard and Abelard, Rancé and Mabillon differed on the subject of studies, each'—we are assured—'was defending values which in reality belonged to the tradition...'.²⁴⁸ Taking it for granted that '[t]here is no Benedictine life without literature', Leclercq filled up the gaps in Benedict's *Rule* to make it bear the weight of subsequent 'tradition'. On any unbiased reckoning, Cassiodorus' *Institutions* are a more eloquent expression of the 'love of letters' than the Benedictine Rule, but then (insists Leclercq) Cassiodorus 'is not a monk and does not think as a monk'.²⁴⁹ Literary and intellectual pursuits that Benedict did not even feel obliged to mention, thereby leaving his successors free to improvise, the master of Vivarium ill-advisedly set forth in detail: 'a program of studies like [his] is inevitably, and fairly soon, out-dated... Cassiodorus did not become part of monastic tradition... [H]is knowledge is called upon, but not his ideals.'²⁵⁰ Like Marrou, Leclercq appears to have discounted Courcelle's research into the trajectories of Vivarian manuscripts.

It was as if, having owed his past ascendancy to honorary membership of the Order of St Benedict, Cassiodorus was now to be denied any claim on posterity. Stripped of the aureole of another's sanctity, he would be confined to a darkness all his own.²⁵¹ The work of Riché (1962), taking up where Marrou's *History of Education* left off, prevented this from happening. As a road-map of post-Roman learning in the West, Riché's book remains indispensable. Reacting to Marrou, he postponed the onset of the 'medieval type' of education until after the end of 'late antiquity'. Against Leclercq, he declined to give Benedict and other early monastic legislators any credit for creating the conditions for a new Christian 'literary' and intellectual culture. 'I see no place,' he wrote, 'for the establishment of "Christian learning" as... Augustine understood it in the ascetic climate described by the *regulae*.'²⁵² The honour of that innovation he reserved for seventh-century Celtic and

247 Leclercq, 7.

248 *Ibid.* 22.

249 Cf. Fontaine, 'Cassiodore et Isidore', 82.

250 *Ibid.* 21. Without citing his work, Leclercq here exactly repeats the position of Thiele. For rebuttals, see Bertini, 98–99 and Aricò, 154–55.

251 Teutsch (1959) is an important exception from the side of library history, fully cognizant of the work of Courcelle and others.

252 Riché, 121. He adds: 'While there is no doubt that Benedict founded an original monastic organization, he was somewhat less original in the realm of religious culture. He

Anglo-Saxon monks and their Continental disciples. Theirs was the ‘desert’ in which the West finally ‘rethought its culture’, theirs the models of study which in due course would encourage Carolingian scholars to return to the ‘antique authors’—more often, in practice, to ‘late antique authors’ such as Cassiodorus and Isidore.²⁵³ Riché’s evaluation of Cassiodorus’ foundation at Vivarium fits his larger historical scheme. Though it was only one of many Italian centres of biblical study and manuscript-production in the sixth century (see map, p. 305), Vivarium was exceptional in combining the spirit of monasticism with a worked-out programme of liberal studies. Cassiodorus had an essentially Augustinian vision of ‘Christian culture’, but was unable to give it durable form. Only his library survived, at least in part, to influence subsequent developments.²⁵⁴

As far as Cassiodorus was concerned, the English translation of Riché’s book that appeared in 1976 (based on the third French edition of 1972) showed few updates on the original of 1962. The 1960s and early 1970s were a time of rising interest in the period of ‘late antiquity’, not least in the Anglophone academy where the term itself was given belated currency by Peter Brown’s popular *World of Late Antiquity* (1971). That the author of the *Institutions* did not immediately benefit from the upsurge of scholarly activity in this field may be interpreted as a sign of his by-then distinctly equivocal status. No longer venerable as a ‘founder’ of the Christian Middle Ages (even by the indirect means of associating him with the early transmission of the *Rule of Benedict*²⁵⁵), the master of Vivarium was losing ground to his more colourful if timebound double, the master of the *Variae*

compares in this respect more with the Eastern cenobites than with Cassiodorus. This monastic culture..., as we have seen, was completely opposed to profane culture...’ Riché’s sense of the opposition of early western monasticism to secular learning is much stronger than Marrou’s and possibly exaggerated.

253 *Ibid.* 495–99. Note esp. 496: ‘If [Cassiodorus, Gregory the Gregory, Isidore and his seventh-century successors in Visigothic Spain] contributed to the formation of medieval culture, they did so by transmitting the legacy of the past rather than by inventing a new system of thought. They were more in line with Augustine than with the real “founders of the Middle Ages,” the Anglo-Saxon and Irish monks.’ In such contexts, Riché uses the phrase ‘medieval culture’ as shorthand for a *system of thought and expression centred on the Bible, incorporating elements of classical learning, capable of being diffused beyond the monastery*. Is this not already the cultural programme of the *Institutions*?

254 *Ibid.* 158–72.

255 On the tangled history of the relationship between the original Benedictine Rule and the ‘Rule of the Master’, once mistakenly attributed to Cassiodorus as a follower of Benedict, see K. Zelzer, 224–35; summary by O’Donnell, *Cassiodorus*, 187–89.

and *Gothic History*.²⁵⁶ The moment was ripe, as it proved, for a study that would focus both the ‘lives’ of Cassiodorus in the portrait of a single individual of the sixth century.

The Institutions of Cassiodorus in its Time and in Tradition

The first full-dress biography since Jean Garet’s in the prolegomena to the 1679 *Opera omnia*, O’Donnell’s *Cassiodorus* (1979) weaves life, works and historical context into a supple and lively narrative designed to serve both as a critical survey of previous scholarship and as provocation to further inquiry.²⁵⁷ Despite acerbic asides, O’Donnell clearly relishes his subject in all his guises. His book is driven by a cheery animus against those who would ‘make of [Cassiodorus] what he was not’ (253) and a desire to fathom the underlying consistencies of a life and oeuvre too frequently partitioned in traditional accounts. Ample chapters on the *Variae* and the *Explanation of the Psalms* flank one on ‘Conversion’ at the centre of the book. A hypothetical chronology has Cassiodorus founding his monastery at Squillace at a time before his departure for Constantinople, perhaps even as early as the 520s.²⁵⁸ The compositional order and logic of the *Institutions* and the relations of its two books to the Psalm commentary are carefully probed. On the character of the Vivarian community and the intellectual programme devised for it, O’Donnell adheres to the coordinates fixed by van de Vyver, Courcelle and Riché.²⁵⁹ Cassiodorus’ monastic project was independent of and more liberal than Benedict’s. Granted that his ‘idea of a Christian culture’ was largely traditional, his articulation and implementation of it were unusually clear and strategic for their time. His overriding concern was the study of Scripture. The preservation of classical literature, except where it directly assisted that purpose, was of little or no consequence to him.

These points had already been more or less solidly established, but O’Donnell was the first to articulate them clearly together (and in English).

256 Much of the current interest in the political career and personality of Cassiodorus may be traced to Momigliano, ‘Cassiodorus and the Italian Culture of His Time’ (1955).

257 For the range of initial reactions (in English), see P. Brown in *University Publishing* (summer 1980): 3–4; A. Momigliano in *Medium Aevum* 49 (1980): 261–62; G. W. Bowersock in *The American Scholar* 50 (1981): 546–52; and Averil Cameron in *Journal of Roman Studies* 71 (1981): 183–86 (‘Cassiodorus Deflated’).

258 The more common (if equally hypothetical) dating has been c.540; for a contrary assertion of the discontinuity of Cassiodorus’ life-course and a post-dating of his monastic foundation to the mid-550s, see Pricoco, ‘Spiritualità monastica’, 359–60.

259 O’Donnell, *Cassiodorus*, 177–220.

At the end of the chapter on Vivarium, he goes a step further. We need not look to Cassiodorus, he says, as the fountainhead of the medieval European tradition of learned monasticism: 'That the monastic quest for God took on intellectual forms reflects, not the influence of one inventor, but the nature of man himself. It would be astonishing if these men had abided in their cloisters meditating on the Word and not become scholars' (221).²⁶⁰ This naturalizing explanation of the origins and rise of learned monasticism is not offered as a new insight, and is in fact part of a longstanding scholarly consensus.²⁶¹ Allowing it, one has no further reason to linger over the contents of any programme of Christian literacy or the fate of any monastic library. If the bookish monk is seen as a naturally occurring type, the historical 'problem' of the evolution and tradition of distinct and variable forms of (Christian, medieval, monastic) intellectual culture evaporates.²⁶² As O'Donnell's narrative already makes clear, the bookishness of Cassiodorus' *Institutions* is not so easily reducible.

O'Donnell begins a final section on the 'Afterlives' of Cassiodorus by describing previous work on the medieval transmission of his works as 'a favorite pastime for scholars, especially palaeographers', then states: 'This study does not pretend to present original research on the subject for many reasons, the most substantial of which is the simplest: the topic is of less pressing interest than we have, in the past, wanted it to be... *Cassiodorus' influence on medieval culture was, to be blunt, insignificant*' (238–39, emphasis added). As we have seen, a dominant tendency in twentieth-century research was to caution against inflated claims for Cassiodorus' impact on later ages. O'Donnell's qualifying statement that Cassiodorus' works were

260 As P. Brown remarked in his review (above n. 257), 'this is to beg the question as to what it is to be a "scholar"'. He gives his own answer for Cassiodorus: 'he was prepared to contract his horizons in order to realize a deeper late antique obsession, that it should be possible to dye a man through and through in the pure essence of his culture [i.e. in this case the culture of the Christian sacred texts]' (4). See further P. Brown, 'Saint as Exemplar', and, in a somewhat different vein, O'Donnell, *Avatars of the Word*.

261 O'Donnell cites Bardy, 'Origines des écoles monastiques', and Leclercq. Cf. Marrou, *History of Education*, 333: 'Literature and the cenobitic life were the accepted things in [Latin monasticism]... There was a kind of automatic association between monks and the written word'; Pricoco, 'Spiritualità monastica', 361–62.

262 McKitterick, *Carolingians and the Written Word*, 167 provides a salutary corrective to this kind of assumption, from a medievalist's point of view: 'It is clear that the [early medieval] monasteries, as centres of book production, played a vital part in the promotion of the written word. But how did they come to contribute so much in this sphere, when in the early years [sic] of the Christian church monks were not famed for either learning or scribal activity?'

later ‘found useful’ and that he was ‘respected’ as an author, without being truly ‘influential’, fairly represents the consensus from Lehmann and Thiele to Riché. Yet the summary he provides of research to date, including Courcelle’s arguments for the conveyance of all or part of the Vivarian library to Rome, the evidence of early currency of the book ‘On Secular Learning’ (otherwise *Inst.* 2) as a guide to the liberal arts, and the signs of the later role of *Inst.* 1 as a guide to the organization of monastic libraries—to say nothing of the strong medieval traditions of the Latin Josephus and *Explanation of the Psalms*—could leave a dispassionate reader wondering how much use and respect would be needed to establish a measure of influence. And what if the question of Cassiodorus’ influence, albeit less pressing than ‘we’ once took it to be, were to be further explored by suitable means? ‘The picture of Cassiodorian survivals in the medieval period,’ O’Donnell concedes, ‘is... set out before us like a mosaic whose pattern momentarily eludes us’ (250). There lies the challenge for future scholarship.

Fortuitously perhaps, O’Donnell’s biography heralded the beginning of a new phase of Cassiodorian research responsive to the latest trends in the study of late antiquity. Especially important for the assessment of the historical significance and influence of Vivarium and the *Institutions* are the papers, mostly literary and philological in their scope, from a conference held near the ancient site of the monastery in 1983.²⁶³ In a document drafted at the time and appended to the proceedings, scholars in attendance called on the Italian authorities to preserve the site: ‘In this *haut-lieu* of European culture, thanks to Cassiodorus, was elaborated a literary oeuvre that was to be decisive for the intellectual and spiritual future of western civilization. It made the province of Calabria the centre, unique in the world, from which Antiquity was able to transmit the essence of its message to the Middle Ages and Modern Times...’ Local politics apart, the tone of the collection is more measured. The scholarly ‘superstition of Vivarium’, on which the claims for the monastery’s unique importance formerly depended, is banished again—this time by an Italian.²⁶⁴ Relieved of this myth, contributors attempt to give Cassiodorus his due. The ‘impracticality’ of his prescriptions for monastic literacy can be disputed.²⁶⁵ His receptivity to the monastic principles of

263 *Flavio Magno Aurelio Cassiodoro*: Atti della settimana di studi, Cosenza–Squillace (19–24 settembre 1983), ed. Leanza. A subsequent conference, published as *Cassiodoro: Dalla corte di Ravenna al Vivarium di Squillace*: Atti del convegno internazionale di studi–Squillace, 25–27 ottobre 1990, ed. Leanza, adds little to this part of the dossier.

264 Pricoco, ‘Spiritualità monastica’, 363, citing a phrase of G. Cavallo.

265 Bertini, 99, responding to the strictures of Leclercq.

Jerome may have been a factor in the larger medieval reception of that father's work.²⁶⁶ As a Christian 'encyclopaedist' in *Inst.* 2 Cassiodorus blazes a trail, even though Isidore takes the credit.²⁶⁷ In the most incisive paper in the collection, Holtz assembles the evidence for the circulation of the *Institutiones*, in its various (usually sundered) states, down to the Carolingian period. The fact that Cassiodorus' two-book harmony of sacred and secular learning did not, as might have been expected, directly underpin the programme of Carolingian clerical reform is no reason to minimize the impact of his work. The reality is that 'each book exerted a powerful influence—but separately, in its own sector', *Inst.* 2 (or 'On Secular Learning') in compendia of the liberal arts, *Inst.* 1 in bibliographical compilations that also included the *De viris illustribus* of Jerome and Gennadius, Augustine's *Retractationes*, and the so-called *Decretum Gelasianum* (a sixth- or early seventh-century list of permitted and 'forbidden' Christian books).²⁶⁸ Cassiodorus' policy of gathering texts on the same subject matter into unified *corpora* may have contributed to the separation of his own: he would thus have been a victim of his success.²⁶⁹ Combining these and other indices, Holtz concluded: 'Lehmann's somewhat negative judgment on the influence exercised by the [*Institutiones*] needs to be revised.'²⁷⁰

The instinct for revision was already abroad. Independent of the Calabrian proceedings of 1983, as firmly rooted in philology, but tilted by a sense of cultural and religious politics in sixth-century Mediterranean lands, Barnish's 1989 article on 'The Work of Cassiodorus after His Conversion' is a skilfully taken snapshot of a scene once more full of action and scholarly suspense; anyone coming fresh to the topic, having begun with O'Donnell's *Cassiodorus* or Barnish's own 1992 selection from the *Variae*, could usefully read it second. Where O'Donnell tracks his subject from the centres of power in Ostrogothic Italy into ever-increasing retirement and finally the cul-de-sac of a remote and short-lived monastery, Barnish insists on keeping wider vistas open: 'Squillace was not the world's end' (166), 'The interests

266 Duval, 349.

267 Della Corte; Fontaine, 'Cassiodore et Isidore'.

268 On this use of *Inst.* see Milde, *Bibliothekskatalog*; Webber, 34–37; and esp. McKitterick, *Carolingians and the Written Word*, 192–210.

269 Cf. Petrucci, *Writers and Readers*, 16: 'it is very likely that the example offered by the Vivarium library and canonized by Cassiodorus' *Institutiones* constituted for several centuries a quite important model in the area of early medieval book production, at least until the Carolingian period'. This is the verdict of a scholar otherwise inclined to minimize the impact of Cassiodorus' cultural programme (below n. 280).

270 Holtz, 'Quelques aspects', 290–95.

of the veteran statesman and litterateur may slowly have changed, but for many years they reached beyond his cloister' (158). One part of the argument for rehabilitating Cassiodorus' public persona in later years relates to his sojourn in Constantinople around 550 and involvement in the Three Chapters dispute.²⁷¹ Another turns on the nature of the scriptorium at Vivarium, which Barnish suggests was 'almost a religious publishing concern, serving the needs of the popular preacher, as well as the scholar or dévot, over a wide area' (167), a claim that can be supported by evidence of the early penetration to distant points of the Mediterranean world—Italy, Africa, Spain, Gaul, Constantinople—of manuscripts whose archetypes may have been, and texts whose originals must have been, written at Vivarium. Against the view that the older Cassiodorus wrote and provided only for monks, Barnish cites the popularity of the separate editions of the treatise 'On Secular Learning' and what he sees as the tension in the *Explanation of the Psalms* between strictly religious and more broadly classicizing interests. Finally, he reckons the interpolations to the treatise 'On Secular Learning' as a favourable indicator, and not the only one, of the level of intellectual activity sustained by at least some members of the Vivarian community after the death of the founder.

Barnish's sense of the longevity of Cassiodorus' political and cultural investments, both during and after his lifetime, is shared and further justified by Troncarelli in a series of studies culminating in his 1998 monograph on 'Vivarium: Its Library, Scriptorium and Legacy'.²⁷² The author's research on manuscripts and traditions associated with the monastery make this one of the most important recent contributions to study of the *Institutions*, even if some of its hypotheses prove too adventurous to win general assent. Like Barnish, Troncarelli seeks to set Cassiodorus' literary and other undertakings—from the project of a Roman Christian academy and the drafting of the treatise *On the Soul* to the definitive establishment of the monastery at Squillace and the Vivarian editions of such works as the *Explanation of the Psalms* and the *Institutions*—within broader currents of Italian public and intellectual life in the sixth century. Cassiodorus appears as the ablest

271 On this issue in theological and ecclesiastical politics, which pitted the emperor Justinian and Pope Vigilius against prominent church- and layman in East and West, and in which Cassiodorus played an ambiguous role, see Barnish, 'Work of Cassiodorus', 158–66, and the note on *Inst.* 1.11.1 below.

272 This is the title of the English summary given in Troncarelli, *Vivarium*, 101–02, which only loosely represents the contents of a loosely constructed book. For an early assessment see Halporn in *The Medieval Review* (online) 00.02.25.

spokesman for a party of highly educated, courtly or aristocratic Italians whose philosophical outlook can be characterized as one of ‘enlightened eclecticism’ in the spirit of Boethius’ Christian neo-Platonism, and who held out for a political and ecclesiastical settlement that would permit the maximum Latin cultural autonomy under Byzantine rule. These interests and affiliations provide the context for Troncarelli’s revisionist theory of the redaction-history of the treatise ‘On Secular Learning’, which would finally be incorporated as Book 2 of the *Institutions*.²⁷³

The history of succeeding states of the *Institutions* is explained by Troncarelli with reference to what he takes to have been the usual practice of scribal and authorial collaboration and re-elaboration at Vivarium (‘lavori a quattro mani’). His account of the monastery as a Christian ‘writing centre’ is the product of a scholarly initiative comparable with Courcelle’s attempted reconstruction of the ‘library of Vivarium’.²⁷⁴ He first makes a choice of a few manuscripts that may reasonably be thought to have been copied under Cassiodorus’ direction or in his milieu.²⁷⁵ By comparing the scribal styles and page-layouts found in these manuscripts with those in other surviving Latin books of the same period, he produces a set of paleographical and codicological criteria that can then be used to test the Vivarian provenance or ancestry of other and later copies of Christian or classical texts. The features in question—many of them designed to enhance the overall intelligibility of the written and illustrated page or opening—are held to compose a distinctive ‘typology’ of the Vivarian book, one that was to be more or less faithfully imitated in copies executed in other scriptoria from the seventh through the tenth century. Even if a good number of the original Vivarian manuscripts were ‘working copies’ for in-house use, others were produced to a standard that suggests they were meant to serve as ‘presentation copies’ and so intended from the start for an outside readership.

Scholars of early medieval Latin manuscript culture have learnt to be

273 Troncarelli, *Vivarium*, 7–21; above pp. 39–40.

274 See esp. Troncarelli, ‘Codici’, and *Vivarium*, 39–66, with the appended plates and tables.

275 The MSS of his original core group are Vatican lat. 5704 = *CLA* 25 (ps.-Epiphanius on the Song of Songs), Oxford Bodleian Auct. T II 26, fol. 146–176 = *CLA* 233b (*Chronicle* of Marcellinus Comes); St Petersburg Public Library Q v I, 6–10 = *CLA* 1614; Verona Biblioteca Capitolare XXXIX (37) = *CLA* 496 (Cassiodorus, *Complexiones*); and fragments of book-binding patterns (as mentioned at *Inst.* 1.30.3) in Paris BN lat. 12190 = *CLA* 632. To these he adds Vatican reg. lat. 2077 = *CLA* 114 (Jerome–Gennadius, *On Famous Men*, etc.) and Paris BN lat. 8907 = *CLA* 572. For doubts about the Vivarian provenance of the Bodleian MS of Marcellinus’ *Chronicle*, see now Croke, 216–23.

wary of grand ‘Vivarian’ hypotheses, and Troncarelli’s claims are bound to be treated with caution. At the very least, his dossier provides a rich material context against which to read the sections of *Inst.* 1 dealing with the work of scribes. He may even have detected the hand of Cassiodorus himself in several manuscripts, and in two cases found his ‘signature’ in *notae Tironianae* at the head of a text. Expanded, the shorthand notation would read: *Cas. (per)legi(t)*, ‘(I) Cassiodorus have read [and corrected this].’²⁷⁶ Although no other hand seems to be identifiable in this way, scrutiny of the differences in letter-forms (‘old-’ versus ‘new-style’ uncial) and in the use of *notae* (the abbreviations and diacritical marks recommended by Cassiodorus) enables Troncarelli tentatively to distinguish more than one generation of monks at Vivarium and to confirm the presence there, in the early decades, of a company of men who, like the founder, had been trained in the legal and bureaucratic protocols of the late Roman empire.²⁷⁷

4. EPILOGUE

I have lived well past my statutory days
The mapping pen has fallen from my hand...
(‘The Last Hours of Cassiodorus’)

While the speaker in Peter Porter’s poem wonders, ‘After me what further barbarisms?’ the modern historian has a slightly different form of the question to answer: How should the ‘statutes’ of Vivarium affect our overall view of the transition between late antique and medieval structures of learning, literacy and intellectual culture in the West?

So far as any generalization can serve in such matters, one made forty years ago by Riché would command a large measure of agreement: ‘Although the former ROMANIA still maintained an antique appearance in the aftermath of the great invasions, during the seventh century and the first half of the eighth century the West was profoundly transformed... Gradually, a new civilization that would replace antique culture evolved.’²⁷⁸ Having

²⁷⁶ Troncarelli, *Vivarium*, 44–55 and table 24.

²⁷⁷ *Ibid.* 55–66, 79–81.

²⁷⁸ Riché, 305, introducing the third and final part of his book: ‘The Beginnings of Medieval Education’. For ‘Romania’ as a term for the geographical orbit of the Roman empire and of Roman citizenship, which remained current even after the breakdown of Roman rule in the West, see Curtius, 30f. Among the texts he quotes are verses by Cassiodorus’ contemporary Venantius Fortunatus, in praise of the Merovingian king Charibert: *Hinc cui Barbaries, illinc Romania plaudit / Diversis linguis laus sonat una viri* (‘To the man whom both Barbariandom

lived almost the length of the last apparently ‘antique’ century, spoken the language of Roman empire, Roman law and Roman civility in the name of barbarian rulers, then drafted a formula for monastic literary activity centred on study of the Bible, Cassiodorus was always likely to be a key witness for modern histories of ancient and medieval culture. We have seen something of the variety of recent opinions concerning his precise role and significance. Two further quotations will confirm the wide range of possible positions. Both are from recent studies that take ‘books’ or ‘the book’ for their title and are explicitly concerned with mechanisms of cultural change.

The first comes at the end of a survey article on ‘The Production and Distribution of Books in Late Antiquity’, from a volume on *The Sixth Century* deriving from the European Science Foundation collaborative project on ‘The Transformation of the Roman World’:

The bridge between the ancient learning and the new basic demand of culture [sic] was erected successfully by Cassiodorus in the monastery which he founded at Squillace, one of his properties in Calabria. The dispersal of the monastery’s library after his death contributed for centuries to the expansion of knowledge and to the production of new books in many western centres, from Iona to Bamberg, Nonantola and Monte Cassino.²⁷⁹

The second is prelude to the concluding section (on Gregory the Great) of a study of ‘The Christian Conception of the Book in the Sixth and Seventh Centuries’:

The collapse of both elementary and higher education, the growing illiteracy of the religious, the destruction of libraries and the shortage of books, the interruption of links between the greater cultural centers: these are the dramatic circumstances that echoed in the pages of the *Institutiones* and that made its objectives unrealizable even as they made possible the survival and reinforcement of entirely different cultural experiences, including the Benedictine conception of labor ‘scienter nescia et sapienter indocta’ (learnedly ignorant and wisely untaught).²⁸⁰

If the main lines of the foregoing introduction are accurately drawn, we must conclude that both these statements—almost diametrically opposite as they would seem to be—are wide of the mark. It is no longer safe to assume with

and Romania celebrate, there rises a single voice of praise in different tongues’). On the seventh century as a cultural watershed in the West, see the essays edited by Hillgarth and Trapp.

279 Bertelli, 60.

280 Petrucci, *Writers and Readers*, 36, from an article first published in *Studi Medievali* 3rd ser. 14 (1973): 961–84.

Bertelli that Vivarium acted as a kind of warehouse from which later ‘centres’ of Christian learning drew their stocks. But it is equally wrong to suggest, as Petrucci does, that Cassiodorus’ fishponds were no better than a stagnant back-water when compared with the lively traditions inaugurated by Benedict and Pope Gregory. Though opposed in their implications, the two errors can be seen to share the same false premise, namely that the *Institutions* and the programme of Christian learning that it stands for are freaks of late Roman culture, destined either to a uniquely glorious after-life or to instant oblivion. Such a presumption of the anomalousness of Cassiodorus’ enterprise fails to take account of its deep roots in earlier Latin Christian educational theory and its substantial (if not necessarily conscious) complicity with related contemporary schemes, including those of Benedict and Gregory. Replace Cassiodorus in the times of his life, as we have tried to do, and he will no longer seem either so backward-looking or so avant-garde a figure.

The two quotations were not chosen merely to point a moral, however. They also highlight an issue that has been at most implicit in the previous pages and requires fuller emphasis before we end. By the time Cassiodorus died, the economic and social basis of the Roman elite education in literature and rhetoric had all but disintegrated in the West. Following the collapse of the taxation system that had formerly paid for the Roman civil administration, and the consequent loss or radical downsizing of the bureaucratic cadres, there was no longer any call for the services of the grammarians and rhetoricians who had drilled Roman schoolboys in the skills that made them eligible for a civil career.²⁸¹ The flourishing of such institutions of ‘secular learning’ in the Rome of the 530s (*Inst.* 1.pref.1) belonged to the lost world of the Ostrogothic renaissance, a world in which Cassiodorus had grown up and which he had seen pass.²⁸² It is natural and no doubt correct to read

281 Heather, ‘Literacy and Power’ (in *Literacy and Power in the Ancient World*, ed. Bowman and Woolf), esp. 181ff. For further relevant contexts, see other essays in the same volume and in *The Uses of Literacy in Early Mediaeval Europe*, ed. McKitterick.

282 Cf. P. Brown, *Rise of Western Christendom*, 136: the monks for whom Cassiodorus drafted the *Orthography* ‘came from a post-war generation, for whom the leisured erudition of the *ancien régime* in Italy was a thing of the past’; Markus, *End of Ancient Christianity*, 218: ‘Of Justinian’s great vision only the codified law survived as an isolated fragment. The second half of the sixth century [in the West] was not only a time of lost hopes. The world of the 530s had vanished for ever. Justinian’s plans for unification produced, paradoxically, an empire more divided, a society more localised and regional, a culture vastly impoverished by the collapse of secular institutions and secular learning, and by the virtual disappearance of the aristocratic elites on which it largely depended in Italy. Cassiodorus, the former minister of Gothic kings, was uncommonly well placed to take the measure of the change that had come over the world...’

passages such as *Inst.* 1.21.2 and 1.28 as concessions to the changed environment. Even so, we should be careful not to read this work solely as the response to a ‘new basic demand of culture’ or strain too hard to hear ‘echoes’ of the ‘dramatic circumstances’ of general cultural decline in its pages. As has been argued above, it is likely that Cassiodorus’ summary of the liberal arts was already devised for readers who had the advantage of an education as good as his own; certainly the treatise *On the Soul*, which would prove so popular among later Christian readers, was addressed in the first instance to a courtly coterie. There was a long tradition in Latin as well as Greek literature of compendious treatments of complex and challenging subject matter. High and ‘basic’ culture, in this restricted sense, had always been on close terms. And whatever the actual capabilities of his monks at the time of his death, Cassiodorus’ last instructions to them still assume a level of literary culture superior to that stipulated in the Rule of Benedict. By this standard, his programme remained elitist—as it was always meant to be.

That is the crucial point. The ‘ideal type’ that Cassiodorus portrays of the Christian intellectual as learned scribe (above pp. 54–55, 61) makes no sense except as a figure of *social distinction*. Such individuals would be no more common in the immediate future than high-ranking Roman administrators like Cassiodorus had been in the past, indeed probably far less common as a proportion of the total population. Yet they would continue to exist in significant numbers throughout and beyond the limits of the former Romania. Like their close typological ancestors in the *scrinia* or imperial secretariats of the late Roman period they would be clearly identifiable as a cadre. Eventually they would form a whole estate of medieval society, that of the *clerici*, ‘clerks’, men of (literate) learning.²⁸³

While recognizing the full reality of the ‘transformation’ of cultural norms that was completed in western Europe in the century or so following Cassiodorus, we do well not to imagine the pen falling too heavily from his hand at the last. Others were ready to take it up at or near the point where he left off. The work of transcribing, interpreting and organizing the universe of Christian sacred and saving texts would be continued by men (and women) who were no more lineally descended from the patricians of the late Roman empire than they were from the tribe of Ezra, but who shared something of a former imperial Quaestor’s belief in the moral efficacy of the written word.

It has been said of the papal chancery in the early Middle Ages: ‘Words—God’s—had empowered a church to exist and other words, tightly

283 Le Goff.

kept and formally applied, empowered that church to act in the world... that is how the papal administration used literacy: to act in the world, to rule, to govern.²⁸⁴ These principles were not confined in their operation to the writ of God's vicar on earth. The type of the 'scribe instructed unto the kingdom of heaven' (Matt. 13:52) had a long career ahead of it. To see how it might be embodied in practice we have only to look as far as Bede, collaborator on the Codex Amiatinus, lifelong admirer of the author of the *Institutions*,²⁸⁵ and an interpreter of the Bible whose works would fuel the preaching of generations of missionaries in Britain and on the continent. And, by the same token, to understand how the Bible and related texts came to be used for the 'conversion' of Europe, we have only to look back to Cassiodorus.

Felix intentio, laudanda sedulitas, manu hominibus praedicare, digitis linguae aperire, salutem mortalibus tacitum dare... (Inst. 1.30.1)

POSTSCRIPT

While this introduction was going into proof, several new publications appeared which will add to our understanding of the *Institutions*. Note in particular, in English:

Brown, Peter. *The Rise of Western Christendom*. 2nd edn. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2003. With an expanded treatment of Cassiodorus at 196–98 ('*Antiquarius Domini*: "Book-producer of the Lord"').

Maas, Michael. *Exegesis and Empire in the Early Byzantine Mediterranean: Junillus Africanus and the Instituta Regularia Divinae Legis*. With a contribution by Edward G. Mathews, Jr. [on Junillus' debt to the school of Nisibis]. *Studien und Texte zu Antike und Christentum*, 17. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2003.

Richard Sharpe. *Titulus: Identifying Medieval Latin Texts: An Evidence-Based Approach*. Turnhout: Brepols, 2003. Includes a survey of the medieval Christian bibliographic tradition of which Cassiodorus was an early exponent.

Also forthcoming:

Pollmann, Karla and Mark Vessey (eds). *Augustine and the Disciplines: From Cassiciacum to 'Confessions'*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. Includes an essay by Danuta Shanzer on the history of schemes of the 'liberal arts' from Varro to Augustine, Martianus Capella and Cassiodorus.

284 Noble, 108.

285 See references given above nn. 19, 149, 235 and Marsden, "'Manus Bedae'".



INSTITUTIONS OF DIVINE AND SECULAR LEARNING



BOOK I

Preface

1. When I realized that there was such a zealous and eager pursuit of secular learning, by which the majority of mankind hopes to obtain knowledge of this world, I was deeply grieved, I admit, that Holy Scripture should so lack public teachers, whereas secular authors certainly flourish in widespread teaching. Together with blessed Pope Agapetus of Rome,¹ I made efforts to collect money so that it should rather be the Christian schools in the city of Rome that could employ learned teachers – the money having been collected – from whom the faithful might gain eternal salvation for their souls and the adornment of sober and pure eloquence for their speech. They say that such a system existed for a long time at Alexandria and that the Hebrews are now using it enthusiastically in Nisibis, a city of Syria.² But since I could not accomplish this task because of raging wars and violent struggles in the Kingdom of Italy – for a peaceful endeavour has no place in a time of unrest – I was moved by divine love to devise for you, with God’s help, these introductory books to take the place of a teacher. Through them I believe that both the textual sequence of Holy Scripture and also a compact account of secular letters may, with God’s grace, be revealed. These works may seem rather plain in style since they offer not polished eloquence but basic description. But they are of great use as an introduction to the source both of knowledge of this world and of the salvation of the soul. I commend in them not my own teaching, but the words of earlier writers that we justly praise and gloriously herald to later generations. For learning taken from the

1 Pope from 535–36.

2 Junillus, an African, a quaestor in Byzantium in the 540s, mentioned in the introduction to his *Instituta regularia divinae legis* [CPL 872] (PL 68.15), written about AD 542, the school of Nestorian scriptural exegesis at Nisibis in Persia. The *Instituta* are a translation of the manual of exegesis by Paul the Persian, a professor at Nisibis. See also *Inst.* 1.10.1 for mention of Junillus’ book as one of the introductory texts for scriptural study. See Kihn, 467–69 (prefatory letter to Bishop Primasius). For Junillus, see *EEChurch*, 1.401, s.v. ‘Junilius’; for Nisibis, see *EEChurch*, 2.598, and Vööbus. See also Macina.

ancients in the midst of praising the Lord is not considered tasteless boasting. Furthermore, you make a serious teacher angry if you question him often; but however often you want to return to these books, you will not be rebuked with any severity.

2. Therefore, beloved brothers, let us ascend without hesitation to Holy Scripture through the excellent commentaries of the Fathers, as if on the ladder of Jacob's vision so that, lifted by their thoughts, we are worthy to arrive at full contemplation of the Lord. For commentary on Scripture is, as it were, Jacob's ladder, by which the angels ascend and descend [Gen. 28:12]; on which the Lord leans, stretching out his hand to those who are weary, and supports the tired steps of those ascending by granting them contemplation of Him. So in this matter, if it is approved, we ought to keep this sequence [cf. the ladder] of reading, so that the recruits of Christ, after they have learned the Psalms, should study the divine text in corrected books until, by continuous practice, with God's help, it is well known to them. The books should be corrected to prevent scribal errors from being fixed in untrained minds, because what is fixed and rooted in the depths of memory is hard to remove. Happy indeed is the mind that has stored such a mysterious treasure in the depths of memory [cf. Virgil *Georgics* 2.490ff.], with God's help; but much happier the mind that knows the ways of understanding from its energetic investigation. As a result, such a mind vigorously expels human thoughts and is occupied to its salvation with divine utterances. I recall that I have seen many men with powerful memories who, asked about the most obscure passages, have solved the questions put to them by examples drawn only from divine authority, for a matter stated obscurely in one place is set down more clearly in another book. An example of this is the Apostle Paul who to a large extent in the letter written to the Hebrews elucidates the writings of the Old Testament by their fulfilment in the new times.

3. Therefore, dearest brothers, after the soldiers of Christ have filled themselves with divine study and, grown strong by regular reading, have begun to recognize passages cited as circumstances indicate, then they may profit from going through this guide. It is divided into two books, briefly indicating the works to be read and the proper order for reading them; thus, the student can learn where Latin commentators explain a given passage. But if he finds something in these writers discussed in a cursory fashion, then those who know the language should seek from Greek expositors helpful interpretations. In this way indifference and negligence may be removed and vital knowledge sought by minds set aflame in the training school of Christ.

4. They say that the Divine Scriptures of the Old and New Testament from the beginning to the end were elucidated in Greek by Clement of Alexandria surnamed ‘Stromateus’, by Cyril, bishop of the same city, by John Chrysostom, Gregory, and Basil as well as other scholarly men whom eloquent Greece praises. But we, with the Lord’s aid, rather seek Latin writers. Since I am writing for Italians so it has seemed most appropriate to point out Roman commentators, for everyone accepts more easily what is reported in his native language. Hence it can happen that something is treated by ancient teachers that could not be provided by modern ones. Therefore it will be enough to point out to you the most learned commentators; when you are sent to such writers you find the proper and full measure of teaching. It will also be better for you not to be drinking in striking novelty but to satisfy yourself at the spring of the ancients. Consequently I may teach at my leisure and instruct you without blameworthy presumption; and I think that this type of instruction is profitable even to us, teaching others in such a way that we most suitably avoid the snares of those who misrepresent us.

5. So in the first book you have teachers of a former age always available and prepared to teach you, not so much by their speech as through your eyes. Therefore, brothers eager for learning, wisely moderate your desires, and in imitation of those who desire to gain health of the body, let us learn what is to be read in proper order. For those who want to be cured ask the doctors what foods they should take first, what refreshment they should take next, so that an indiscriminate appetite does not tax rather than restore the failing strength of their weakened limbs.

6. In the second book on the arts and disciplines³ of liberal studies a few things need to be imbibed; and yet in this setting there is little harm to the

³ *Artes* and *disciplinae* here in Cassiodorus refer, like the classical (*bonae artes*) (cf., e.g., Cicero, *De oratore* 1.158) to a systematic body of knowledge, specifically what are later known as the seven liberal arts: grammar, rhetoric, dialectic (the so-called *trivium*); arithmetic, geometry, music, astronomy (the so-called *quadrivium*). These are the subject of the second book of the *Institutiones*. There, Cassiodorus distinguishes between *artes* and *disciplinae* (*Inst.* 2.3.20): ‘I must now consider ... the difference between an art and a discipline, so that difference in the terms in their confusion not confound the reader. Plato and Aristotle, worthy teachers of secular letters, considered the difference between an art and a discipline in the following way: an art involves working in an accustomed state with things that have the possibility of being other than they are; a discipline, however, is concerned with those things that cannot turn out differently or other than they are.’ Discipline can also be contrasted with doctrine, with the former referring to the practice, the latter to the theory of a particular branch of knowledge. See Marrou and I. Hadot.

person who slips, if he errs while keeping his faith firm. Whatever has been found in Divine Scripture on such matters will be better understood if one has prior acquaintance with them. It is well-known that, at the beginning of spiritual wisdom, information on these subjects was sowed, as it were, that secular teachers afterwards wisely transferred to their own rules as I have perhaps shown at suitable places in my *Psalm Commentary*.⁴

7. Therefore, pray to God, the source of all that is useful; read, I pray, constantly; go over the material diligently; for frequent and intense meditation is the mother of understanding. I have not forgotten that the most eloquent commentator Cassian in his *Conversations* Book 5⁵ related that a certain old and simple man had been asked about a most obscure passage of Divine Scripture and that he, after long prayer, by the light from above understood and explained the most difficult matters to his questioners. He had suddenly been filled by divine inspiration with what he had not learned before from human teachers. St Augustine tells a similar story in his *Christian Learning*⁶ of an illiterate foreign servant who through constant prayer suddenly read a book that was handed to him as though he had been taught by long practice in school. Concerning this matter Augustine himself spoke later as follows: although these miracles are surprising, and there is the statement that ‘all things are possible to those who believe’ [Mark 9:22], we ought not to pray for such things often, but rather stick to the practice of ordinary teaching so that we do not rashly seek after those things that are beyond us and risk testing the precept of the Lord who says in Deuteronomy: ‘You shall not put the Lord your God to the test’ [Deut. 6:16], and again says in the Gospel, ‘an evil and adulterous generation demands a sign’, and so forth [Matthew 12:39]. Therefore let us pray that those things that are now closed be opened to us and that we never be cut off from our zeal for reading; even David when he was constantly occupied with the law of the Lord nevertheless cried out to the Lord saying, ‘give me discernment that I may learn your commands’ [Psalms 118:73]. Such is the sweet gift of this pursuit that the more one understands the more one seeks.

8. Although all Divine Scripture shines with heavenly brilliance and the excellence of the Holy Spirit appears clearly in it, I have dedicated my efforts to the Psalter, the Prophets, and the Apostolic Letters, since they

4 *Exp.Ps.* ‘Notae’ (CCSL 97.2); Praefatio 15.65–76 (CCSL 97.19–20). English translation: ACW 51 (1990), 38f. For these *notae*, see Halporn, ‘Methods of Reference’.

5 Actually Cassian, *De institutis coenobiorum* [CPL 513] 5.33 (CSEL 17.3–231). English translation: NPNF 2nd ser. 11 (1894), 161–621.

6 Augustine, *Doct.Chr.* [CPL 263], Prologue 4–8 (CCSL 32.2–5). FOTC 2 (1947), 20–24.

seem to me to stir deeper profundities, and to contain, as it were, the glorious citadel and summit of the whole Divine Scripture. I have read over carefully all nine sections⁷ containing the divine authority as best as an old man could. I carefully collated against older books as my friends read aloud to me from these. In this pursuit I claim that I have struggled, God willing, to achieve a harmonious eloquence without mutilating the sacred books by taking undue liberties.

9. I believe this also ought to be noted: St Jerome, led by consideration for the simple brothers, said in his preface to the Prophets that he had marked his translation as it is now read today, by *cola* and *commata*,⁸ for the sake of those who had not learned punctuation from the teachers in the schools of secular learning.⁹ Guided by the authority of this great man, I have judged it right to follow to the extent that other books be supplied with punctuation marks. But for very elementary reading, let those parts of the text that, as I have said, Jerome set out by *cola* and *commata* in lieu of punctuation, be enough so that I do not seem to have presumptuously gone beyond the judgment of such a great man. The rest of the volumes that were not marked with such punctuation I have left to be examined and corrected by scribes who are specially precise and attentive.¹⁰ Although they cannot altogether maintain the fine points of orthography, they will, I think, hasten to complete at least the correction of the ancient books in every way. They

7 *Novem codices*: the nine divisions of the entire Bible. See my article (in progress), 'Book Terms in Cassiodorus'.

8 *Cola et commata*: a method of punctuation by phrases, devised by St Jerome for parts of his translation of the Bible (see his prefaces to Isaiah and Ezekiel, *BSV*, 1096 and 1266). It is a rhetorical system, based, as Jerome says, on ancient texts of the orators Demosthenes and Cicero, and useful for reading aloud. Each phrase is set with the first letter left-shifted one letter width (like a short paragraph), and the reader would mark a pause at the end of the phrase by taking a fresh breath. For this type of punctuation in medieval manuscripts, see Parkes, *Pause and Effect*, 15–16 and plates 10 (Codex Amiatinus, s. viii) and 14 (Paris BN lat 6322, s. ix); T.J. Brown, 81.

9 Jerome, *Prologus in Isaia* 1–6 [*BSV*, 1096].

10 Cassiodorus has three possibilities in mind: 1) unpunctuated texts, like many in his day, that required considerable education (by the *grammaticus*) and practice to read (see, for example, the famous early Vergilian codices of the fourth century, which did not even separate words); 2) punctuated texts, which he proposes to offer as far as possible; 3) text divided *per cola et commata* (see n. 7, above): it would be presumptuous to extend this beyond the parts so divided by Jerome, which are extensive enough to allow the semi-literate to participate and learn. Dividing text *per cola et commata* would be laborious and expensive, because it would require total recopying, taking a lot of decisions and using a lot of parchment or papyrus, whereas some basic punctuation could be introduced into existing copies.

understand their own critical marks that by and large refer and call attention to this skill. To eliminate ingrained error to some extent from their midst, I have set down in a following book on the rules of proper spelling a summary that is suited to their understanding so that crude conjectures of hasty correctors should not be passed on for posterity to complain of. I have tried to locate as many of the earlier writers on orthography as I could for use by the scribes, who can be if not corrected in every respect, at least greatly improved. Correct spelling is usually set out without ambiguity by the Greeks; among the Latin writers it has obviously been neglected because of its difficulty and hence also it now requires the serious attention of the reader.

10. Now that the arrangement of the work undertaken has been discussed, it is time for us to approach the most spiritually healthful gift of religious learning, the light of devout souls, a heavenly gift, and a joy that will remain forever – which is, I hope, briefly conveyed in the two books that follow.

- I. Octateuch
- II. Kings
- III. Prophets
- IV. Psalter
- V. Solomon
- VI. Hagiographa
- VII. Gospels
- VIII. Apostolic Letters
- IX. Acts of the Apostles and the Apocalypse
- X. The Types of Understanding
- XI. The Four Accepted Councils
- XII. The Division of Divine Scripture according to St Jerome
- XIII. The Division of Divine Scripture according to St Augustine
- XIV. The Division of Divine Scripture according to the Septuagint
- XV. How Carefully the Text of Holy Scripture Ought to be Corrected
- XVI. The Excellence of Divine Scripture
- XVII. Christian Historians
- XVIII. St Hilary
- XIX. St Cyprian
- XX. St Ambrose
- XXI. St Jerome
- XXII. St Augustine
- XXIII. The Abbot Eugippius and the Abbot Dionysius

XXIV. General Summary; the Zeal with which Holy Scripture Ought to be Read

XXV. Geographers to be Read by Monks

XXVI. Critical Marks to be Added to Texts

XXVII. Figures and Disciplines¹¹

XXVIII. Reading for Those who Cannot Attempt Advanced Study

XXIX. The Location of the Monastery of Vivarium or Castella

XXX. Scribes and Advice on Proper Spelling

XXXI. Medical Writers

XXXII. Advice to the Abbot and Congregation of Monks

XXXIII. Prayer

I. The Octateuch

1. The first section of Divine Scripture, the Octateuch, begins our enlightenment with an historical account starting from Genesis. St Basil wrote a polished exposition of the beginning of this book in excellent Greek, which the fine writer, Eustathius, rendered in Latin so successfully that his powerful eloquence seems to equal the genius of that most learned man.¹² Basil extended his nine books up to the creation of man. In them he explained the nature of heaven and earth, of air and of waters, and also disclosed the qualities of practically all created things. Thus he teaches by treating at length in very clear and exact detail what was passed over for the sake of brevity in the authoritative text.

2. Father Augustine, too, in his two books against the Manichees¹³ explained the text of Genesis so thoroughly that almost no question in it remains unclarified. And so, the heresy involuntarily offers the opportunity for careful instruction of the orthodox¹⁴ by the way it is refuted and boldly

11 For the meaning of 'disciplines', see above, fn. 3.

12 Basil of Caesarea, *Homiliae in Hexaëmeron* (CPG 2835). For the Latin translation (PG 30.869–968) by an obscure Eustathius (fl. AD 450), see Mendieta–Rudberg. For Eustathius, see Altaner, 'Eustathius', and his *Patrology*, 339. French translation: SChr (1968), vol. 26; English: NPNF 2nd ser. 8 (1895).

13 Augustine, *De Genesi contra Manichaeos* [CPL 265] (PL 34.173–220).

14 Orthodox: *catholicus*. Cassiodorus uses the term, like the Fathers of the Church from about the third century on, to describe the Church and its followers as part of the universal or general Church of Christ as opposed to heretical or dissident sects. See J.N.D. Kelly, 'Catholic', esp. 38f. Indeed, Cassiodorus uses the terms 'catholicus' and 'orthodoxus' as practically synonymous (in speaking of St Augustine he says: '[magister] totus catholicus, totus orthodoxus invenitur' *Exp.Ps.* praef. 26; CCSL 97.3).

defeated. So I hope it was a good idea to bind these books into the copy of Basil that the text of Genesis may be revealed to the reader in a clearer light.

3. St Ambrose, a lucid and pleasant teacher, wrote six books on this subject in his usual eloquent style and called the work *On the Six Days of Creation*.¹⁵

4. St Augustine was an eloquent and meticulous controversialist; he also wrote twelve books on the beginning of Genesis, which he swathed in the beauty of practically all his learning. He called the work *On Genesis Considered Word for Word*.¹⁶ Although St Basil and St Ambrose gained universal praise for their brilliant treatment of the same material, nevertheless, Augustine, with God's bounty, advanced his work to yet another height – a difficult accomplishment after such learned men. He also wrote thirty-three books against Faustus the Manichean¹⁷ in which he vanquishes Faustus' wicked false belief by clear reasoning and again discussed in a marvellous way the Book of Genesis. Likewise, in a work in two books to which he gave the title *Against the Enemy of the Law and the Prophets*,¹⁸ he unravelled many problems involving questions of divine law. He burned with such fierce piety against these men that he wrote more intensively and more vigorously against them than he argued against other heresies. In the final three books of his *Confessions*¹⁹ he also presented an explanation of Genesis and thus he revealed the depth of the subject by returning to it so often. In seven books he employed useful logical proofs to explain problems in the sacred books that are obscure and difficult.²⁰ This excellent teacher and man of incisive mind strove to leave nothing that is presented for the salvation of souls ignored through fatal oversight. He also wrote seven other marvellous books on *Forms of Expression* in which he set out the figures of traditional rhetoric and many other expressions proper to Sacred Scripture (i.e., which are not in common usage) with the thought that the soul of the reader should not be disturbed and puzzled by any difficulties when it finds unfamiliar constructions.²¹ At the same time this outstanding teacher also showed that

15 Ambrose, *Exameron* [CPL 123] (CSEL 32.1). English translation: FOTC 42 (1961).

16 Augustine, *De Genesi ad litteram* [CPL 266] (CSEL 28.1.3–435). English translation: ACW 41, 42 (1982).

17 Augustine, *Contra Faustum Manichaeum* [CPL 321] (CSEL 25.1.251–797). English translation: NPNF ser.1 4 (1887), 155–345.

18 Augustine, *Contra adversarium Legis et Prophetarum* [CPL 326] (PL 42.603–666).

19 Augustine, *Confessiones* [CPL 251] (CCSL 27). English translation: FOTC 21 (1953).

20 Augustine, *Quaestiones in Heptateuchum* [CPL 270] (CCSL 33.i–lxxiv; 1–377).

21 Augustine, *Locutiones in Heptateuchum* [CPL 269] (CCSL 33.lxxv–lxxxi; 379–465).

the common expressions, i.e., the figures of speech of the grammarians and rhetoricians, arose from Scripture and still Scripture retains a unique quality that up to now no secular teacher has been able to imitate. He is also said to have written seven sermons on the seven days of Genesis.²² I am eagerly and diligently seeking and passionately hope to find a copy of them.

5. St Ambrose also wrote seven books on the patriarchs that disentangle passages of the Old Testament by the happy device of set problems.²³

6. St Jerome, too, in one volume on the Book of Genesis²⁴ settled many points raised on matters of Hebrew that pass down through the Divine Scriptures of both Testaments like a line drawn by one pen with balanced perfection. The orthodox must read through these works because the text is clear and intelligible when these great problems have been resolved. To increase our understanding he also compiled a one-volume work that explains Hebrew names and places found in the authority of older books adding his own Latin translations.²⁵ This most industrious teacher also wrote another book on the New Testament that disentangles problems relating to Old Testament law.²⁶

7. We ought also to read St Prosper eagerly for he has dealt with the entire divine authority in three books in 153 chapters,²⁷ which are like the <number of> fish the nets of the apostles drew from the stormy depths of this world [John 21:11].

8. There are also extremely eloquent sermons of Origen on the Octateuch, in three books.²⁸ Many Fathers consider him a heretic, but St Jerome translated some of his short works into elegant Latin. Besides the attacks on him by the authority of so many Fathers, he has been condemned again

22 Augustine, *Sermones de vetere Testamento* 1–7 [CPL 284] (CCSL 41.3–76).

23 Ambrose, *De patriarchis* [CPL 132] (CSEL 32.2.125–160). English translation: FOTC 65 (1972), 243–75.

24 Jerome, *Liber quaestionum hebraicarum in Genesim* [CPL 580] (CCSL 72.1–56). Cf. Kamesar; Hayward.

25 Jerome, *Liber interpretationis hebraicorum nominum* [CPL 581] (CCSL 72.57–161).

26 Jerome, *Quaestiones de Novo Testamento*. Cf. Lupus of Ferrières, *Ep. 87 ad Altsig abbatem* (ed. Levillan, 2.78–80). Cf. also Courcelle, *Late Latin Writers*, 399f.

27 Ps.-Prosper (= Quodvultdeus), *Liber promissionum et praedictorum Dei* [CPL 413] (CCSL 60.1–189). French translation: SChr 101–02. The text of Cassiodorus here is clearly corrupt: ... Prosper ... , qui tres libros totius auctoritatis divinae in centum quinquaginta tribus titulis comprehendit ... As the text of the book that has come down to us shows, the work consists of three books in 153 chapters. Given that the work deals with the whole of Scripture and not just the Octateuch, it seems out of place here.

28 Origen (see below, n. 32). See Clark, 121–51.

recently by blessed Pope Vigilius. Theophilus, bishop of Alexandria, has proved on the basis of orthodox doctrine that thirty-five opinions of Origen are distorted by heretical errors. Epiphanius of Cyprus, bishop of the Church of Salamis, through his episcopal authority also attacked Origen with great hostility, refuting with great grief his writings, perverted by most baleful cleverness. But St Jerome, in a letter written to Tranquillinus,²⁹ convincingly showed how Origen is to be read. He would not prevent learned men from reading indispensable sections of his work, nor yet hurl the unwary to ruin. Some have properly said that Origen ought to be treated like anise; for though he seasons the food of sacred literature, he himself is to be cooked and when the flavour is extracted, thrown away. Finally it is said of him 'where he writes well, no one writes better; where he writes badly, no one writes worse'.³⁰ So we must read him cautiously and judiciously to draw the healthful juices from him while avoiding the poisons of his perverted faith that are dangerous to our way of life. The comment Virgil made while he was reading Ennius is applicable also to Origen. When asked by someone what he was doing Virgil replied, 'I am looking for gold in a dung-heap'.³¹ And so, as much as I could find in my cursory reading of the works of Origen, I marked the passages that contained statements against the rules of the Fathers with the sign of rejection, the *achresimon* <indicating 'not to be used'>. With such a mark on his perverted opinions indicating where he is dangerous, he cannot succeed in deceiving. Later writers say that he should be shunned completely because he subtly deceives the innocent. But if, with the Lord's help, we take proper precaution, his poison can do no harm.

9. I have also left you, with the Lord's help, if you want to read them, some sermons of Origen: sixteen on Genesis, twelve on Exodus, sixteen on Leviticus, twenty-nine on Numbers, four on Deuteronomy that contain a most careful and subtle commentary, twenty-six on Joshua, and nine on Judges.³² But on Ruth I was not able to find any older commentaries, so I

29 Jerome, *Ep.* [CPL 620] 62 (CSEL 54.583–84). English translation: NPNF 2nd ser. 6 (1893), 133–34.

30 Cf. Sulpicius Severus, *Dial.* 1.6–7. English translation: FOTC 7 (1949).

31 Cf. Donatus auctus, *Vita Vergiliana*, p. 364.1f., ed. K. Bayer, Würzburg: Heimeran, 1970. Cf. Jerome, *Ep.* [CPL 620] 61.2 (CSEL 54.577f.); 62 (CSEL 54.583f.); English translation: NPNF 2nd ser. 6 (1893) 131f., 133f. The reference in Mynors to *Ep.* 107, copied by Jones, is incorrect..

32 Origen, *In Genesin homiliae xvi* (Latin, trans. Rufinus) [CPG 1411] (GCS 29.1–144; SChr 7bis); *In Exodum homiliae xiii* (sic) (Latin, trans. Rufinus) [CPG 1414] (GCS 29.145–279); *In Leviticum homiliae xvi* (Latin, trans. Rufinus) [CPG 1416] (GCS 29. 280–507; SChr 286–287); *In Numeros homiliae xxviii* (sic) (Latin, trans. Rufinus) [CPG 1418] (GCS 30.3–

persuaded the priest Bellator, a very religious man, to write a new one.³³ In two books he has done much honour to the remarkable qualities of this woman and of other women after her. I have added these books to the commentaries of Origen as was appropriate so that the interpretation of the whole Octateuch might be full and complete.

10. To make the text of the Octateuch available to us in a summarized version, I thought that the chapter-headings taken from the entire sequence of readings should be set down at the beginning of each book, chapter-headings that had been written by our ancestors in the course of the text. The reader might thus be usefully guided and made profitably attentive, for he will easily find everything he is looking for, seeing it briefly marked out for him.

II. Kings³⁴

1. Since I could not find a commentary on the whole text of the second section, that of Kings, I have woven together some fragments from learned men into a single garment as it were, so that what could not be found in a single body of text can be known piece by piece in a unified collection.

2. I did indeed find four sermons on I Kings by Origen.³⁵

3. Blessed Augustine, writing to Simplicius, bishop of Milan, on this book, solved six problems that had been set to him:³⁶ 1. On the passage in which it says: 'And an evil spirit from the Lord assailed Saul' [I Kings 16:14];³⁷ 2. What is the meaning of 'It repenteth me that I have made Saul king' [I Kings 15:11]; 3. Whether the unclean spirit that was in the witch could have made Samuel visible to Saul so that he might speak with him [I

285); *Homiliae in Deuteronomium* (Greek, fragments) [CPL 1419]; *In Iesu Nave homiliae xxvi* (Latin, trans. Rufinus) [CPG 1420] (GCS 30.286–463; SChr 71); *In librum Iudicum homiliae ix* (Latin, trans. Rufinus) [CPG 1421] (GCS 30.464–522). English translation of Homilies on Genesis and Exodus: FOTC 71 (1982); on Leviticus, FOTC 83 (1990).

33 *Bellator's *In Ruth libri II* is not extant

34 This translation follows the titles and numbering of the Latin Bibles. In English translations (e.g., KJV), I and II Kings are referred to as I and II Samuel; III Kings and IV Kings are referred to then as I and II Kings. I and II Paralipomenon are, in English Bibles, often referred to as I and II Chronicles.

35 Cf. Origen, *Homilia in I Reg. 1:2* (Latin, trans. Rufinus) [CPG 1423 (1)] (GCS 33.1–25). *Homilia in I Reg. 28:3–25* (Greek) [CPG 1423 (2)] (GCS 6.283–294; *Kleine Texte* 83.3–15).

36 Augustine, *De diversis quaestionibus ad Simplicianum* 2.1–6 [CPL 290] (CCSL 44.58–74; 75–81; 81–86; 86–87; 88–89; 89–90).

37 The Latin text of Cassiodorus is that of Augustine: *et insilivit spiritus Domini malus in Saul*; the Vulgate reads: *et exagitabat eum spiritus nequam a Domino*.

Kings 28:7ff.]; 4. On II Kings, where it says: 'And David went in, and sat before the Lord' [II Kings 7:18]; 5. On III Kings, Elijah's words: 'O Lord <you were?> the witness of this widow with whom I dwell in her house, and you have done evil so that you slew her son' [III Kings 17:20];³⁸ 6. In the same book, on the spirit of lying by whom King Achab was deceived [III Kings 22:21ff.].

4. I have found on the second book St Augustine's one sermon on Absalom who, because he coveted the kingdom, decided to kill his father David.³⁹

5. On the same work I have also found three celebrated discussions of blessed Augustine of which the first in importance is that on I Kings, the passage in which David fought with Goliath [I Kings 17]; 2. On III Kings, the passage on Elijah and the widow of Sarephta [III Kings 17:10ff.]; 3. IV Kings, the passage in which Elisha blessed the fatal spring [IV Kings 2:19ff.].⁴⁰

6. And blessed Jerome writing to Abundantius⁴¹ discussed three other difficult problems: 1. Why did David, who voluntarily went to attack Saul along with Achis the King of the Allophyli, slay the man who afterwards announced to him the death of said Saul [II Kings 1]; 2. Why did David, as he was dying, order his son Solomon to kill Joab, the general of his army [III Kings 2:5]; 3. On Semei who shouted unbearable and injurious curses on the fleeing David and threw stones at him [II Kings 16:5ff.].

7. I have likewise discovered one sermon of Origen on the second book of the same work.⁴²

8. On the third book of the above-mentioned work, St Ambrose, bishop of Milan, has a sermon on the Judgment of Solomon [III Kings 3:16ff.];⁴³ St Jerome, too, spoke on this passage in a pleasant commentary⁴⁴ in his usual

38 The Latin text of Cassiodorus is taken from Augustine: *O Domine, testis huius viduae cum qua habito apud ipsam, et tu male fecisti ut occidere filium eius*; the Vulgate reads: *Domine Deus meus etiamne viduam apud quam ego utcumque sustentor adflixisti ut interficeres filium eius*.

39 *Augustine, *Sermo de Abessalon* (II Reg 15). Not extant; for references in Augustine to II Reg 15, see La Bonnardière, 76.

40 Augustine, *De David et Golia* (Serm. 32); *De Elia et Vidua Sareptena* (Serm. 11); **De Eliseo* (Serm. App. 41, 42) [CPL 284] (CCSL 41.398–411; 161–163). The two sermons of Augustine on Elisha (PL 39.1826–1830) do not treat the passage that Cassiodorus cites.

41 *Jerome, *Quaestiones III de libro III Regum ad Abundantium*, is not extant.

42 Cf. Origen, *Fragmenta e catenis in Regnorum libros* [CPG 1423 (3)] (GCS 6.295–304).

43 Ambrose, *De iudicio Salomonis* (= ? *De Virginitate* 1) [CPL 147] (PL 16.265 [279]; ed. E. Cazzaniga, Turin 1954).

44 Jerome, *Ad Rufinum de iudicio Salomonis* (Ep. 74) [CPL 620] (CSEL 55.23–29).

manner; on this also I have found that the learned St Augustine published a sermon,⁴⁵ so it should be clear that so great a miracle rests on the authority of worthy writers.

9. In addition St Jerome wrote concerning this book to bishop Vitalis about the problem that Solomon and Achaz are said to have begotten sons when they were in their eleventh year [IV Kings 16:12; 18:2],⁴⁶ something that ordinary nature scarcely allows.

10. St. Augustine in *The City of God*, Book 17, titulus 4, in his eloquent discussion of the period of the kings, among other things, elucidates the Canticle of Hannah [I Kings 2:1ff.] from beginning to end.⁴⁷

11. On II Paralipomenon I have found only one lengthy sermon of Origen.⁴⁸

12. I have collected all this matter into one volume so that you may read relevant material, with the Lord's help, in the place of commentaries on the books themselves. I have also added to this volume empty gatherings so that writings yet to be found on the above work may be added to the commentaries mentioned above.

13. The above-mentioned two books of Paralipomenon, whose great utility is preached by the Fathers, are known to contain a brief but full list of historical events. Since I have not discovered ancient chapter-headings like the chapter-headings existing for the preceding books, I have, as I thought best, added them in an orderly fashion to each passage so that by any kind of service in letters the quality of my devotion might be recognized.⁴⁹

III. Prophets

1. **The Prophets.** St Jerome, who was the first to write notes for beginners and the young on the whole fifth section,⁵⁰ that of the prophets, commented suitably and briefly.⁵¹ I have left you these glosses in a volume of the Prophets

45 Augustine, *Sermo de iudicio Salomonis* (10) [CPL 284] (CCSL 41.153–159).

46 Jerome, *Ep. ad Vitalem* (72) [CPL 620] (CSEL 55.8–12).

47 Augustine, *Civ.* 17.4 [CPL 313] (CCSL 48.555–562). English translation: FOTC 24 (1954), 23–34.

48 *Origen, *Sermo in II Par.*, is not extant.

49 *Cassiodorus, *Liber memorialis* (sive *Liber titulorum*). Not extant (it may never have been a separate work), but could possibly be reconstructed from the *capitulationes* in the codex Amiatinus. See Cappuyns, 1375 and 1386.

50 On sections = *codices*, see Preface, note 7.

51 *Jerome's *Annotationes breves in omnes Prophetas* are not extant.

in which these comments were recently added. The grape-cluster shapes of these glosses have been properly entered in this codex so that the vineyard of the Lord might seem filled with a heavenly richness and to have produced the sweetest fruits.⁵² For the more experienced and those who are already strengthened by some meditation, St Jerome produced other full and clear commentaries through the bounty of Christ the Lord. He made the abstruse and shadowy statements of the prophets understandable by offering various translations and untying the knots of the obscure allegories. Thus the holy doctor revealed the great mystery of the Heavenly King to human understanding.

2. **Isaiah.** St Jerome has marvellously commented in eighteen books on Isaiah who 'ought to be called not so much a prophet as an evangelist', because he clearly made reference to the mysteries of Christ and of the Church.⁵³

3. **Jeremiah.** Origen, in forty-five sermons in excellent Greek, has expounded Jeremiah who 'wept over the destruction of his city in a four-fold alphabet';⁵⁴ and of those I have found fourteen in translation that I have left to you.⁵⁵ St Jerome is also said to have written a commentary in twenty books on Jeremiah of which I have been able to find only six but I am, with the Lord's aid, looking for the rest.⁵⁶

4. **Ezekiel.** St Jerome in fourteen books expounded Ezekiel whose style in Hebrew is neither completely mannered nor yet simple.⁵⁷ Although Daniel is not considered by the Hebrews in the group of prophets, he was, never-

52 Grape-cluster shaped glosses: *botrionum formulae*. Such glosses are common in sixth-century manuscripts. They are placed in the margins of manuscripts, and shaped with the letters tapering to form a kind of inverted triangle. For an extended study of marginal materials, see Natale, and for the grape-cluster kind, 622, fn. 16. An important sixth-century example of such a gloss is offered in the Monte Cassino Ambrosiaster (Monte Cassino, Archivio della Badia 150 [pp. 65–110], ante AD 570; *CLA* 3.374a) in a hand Lowe calls 'sloping uncial'. See also Courcelle, 370.

53 Jerome, *Commentarii in Isaïam* [CPL 584] (CCSL 73–73A); Gryson.

54 The Book of Lamentations, attached in the Vulgate Bible to the end of Jeremiah, is a poetic book that in Hebrew consists of five chapters within which the sections of each of the first four begin with one of the twenty-two letters of the Hebrew alphabet.

55 Origen, *Homiliae XIV in Ieremiam* (Latin, trans. Jerome). *CPG* 1438 (1). *PG* 13.255–542 (with Greek text *en face*); *PL* 25.585–692 (different order). *Homiliae II latinae* (trans. Jerome). *CPG* 1438 (2). *GCS* 33.290–317; *SChr* 238.300–366. These latter are the two sermons of Origen not extant in Greek.

56 Jerome, *In Hieremiam prophetam* lib. vi [CPL 586] (CSEL 59 & CCSL 74).

57 Jerome, *Commentarii in Ezechielem* [CPL 587] (CCSL 75; Indices 75A.953–992, 1002–1014).

theless, counted among the writers of the Hagiographa,⁵⁸ and St Jerome discussed that work in three books.⁵⁹

5. **Minor Prophets.** The twelve remaining prophets, whom common usage calls the minor prophets because of the brevity of their books, have been expounded by St Jerome in twenty books: three books on Hosea, one book on Obadiah, three books on Amos, one book on Joel, one book on Jonah, one book on Nahum, two books on Habakkuk, one book on Zephaniah, one book on Haggai, three books on Zechariah, two books on Micah, one book on Malachi.⁶⁰ So that nothing may be left unclear about them, he has shown in his most beautiful way how their names are to be understood in Latin, by fashioning his own etymologies.⁶¹ Thus, the field of the Lord ploughed, as it were, by some hard-working hired men and watered by the dew of heaven, brought forth with the Lord's bounty spiritual fruits for us.

6. It is said that St Ambrose also wrote a commentary on the prophets in his usual sweet and eloquent style,⁶² but I have up to now been unable to find it. I leave it to you to seek after it zealously, so that the enlarged scholarly commentary may instruct you fully and reward you with the salvation of your souls.

IV. Psalter

1. The third section containing the Psalter, which was the first work in our commentaries, has fourth place in the arrangement of Biblical books.⁶³

58 In the Septuagint (LXX), which is a Greek translation of the Hebrew Bible, the Book of Daniel, according to Cassiodorus, is included with the twelve minor prophets, preceding Hosea (see *Inst.* 1.14.1, Jerome, preface to the Book of Daniel, *BSV*, 1341–42). In the modern edition of LXX (Rahlfs) it is included, with Susanna and Bel and the Dragon, after Ezechiel. The Hagiographa (Hebrew, 'ketubim') are the last of the three divisions of the Hebrew Bible, that portion which includes books not part of the Law or the Prophets. For the books of the Hagiographa in Cassiodorus, see *Inst.* 1.6.

59 Jerome, *Commentarii in Daniele* [CPL 588] (CCSL 75A.771–913).

60 Jerome, *Commentarii in Prophetas minores* [CPL 589] (CCSL 76–76A).

61 Jerome, *Liber interpretationis hebraicorum nominum* [CPL 581] (CCSL 72.57–161).

62 *Ambrose, *Expositio Esaiæ prophetæ (fragmenta apud S. Augustinum)* [CPL 142] (CCSL 14.403–408). The work is not extant, and Cassiodorus may have learned of this commentary from his readings in St Augustine. Ballerini, the editor of the six Ambrosian fragments in CCSL 14, has collected them from Augustine, *De gratia Christi* 41 (47), 49 (54); *De peccato originali* 41 (47); *De nuptiis et concupiscentia* 1.35 (40); *Contra ii epistulas Pelagianorum* 4.11 (29–31); *Contra Iulianum* 2.8 (22); *De dono perseverantiae* 23 (64).

63 *Codex tertius*: see Preface, note 7. Cassiodorus, *Expositio Psalmorum* [CPL 900] (CCSL 97–98); English translation: ACW 51–53 (1990–1991).

Blessed Hilary,⁶⁴ blessed Ambrose,⁶⁵ and blessed Jerome⁶⁶ have treated some of the psalms, but blessed Augustine⁶⁷ in a scholarly manner more fully treated all. Up to now I have collected two decades of the former commentaries [viz. Hilary, Ambrose, and Jerome] with the Lord's help.⁶⁸

2. And, as one draws light from light, so with the Lord's bounty, I have written drawing on him [sc. Augustine], so that the famous line of the bard of Mantua should be truly fulfilled in my case, 'and I cackle as a goose among the melodious swans' [Virgil, *Eclogues* 9.36]. In this work I have not disturbed the Psalm text under discussion by straying from the subject, but in place of glosses I have stated briefly on each passage as the nature of the text itself demands. If anyone perchance deigns to read this work after reading such great commentators he will understand (as the other Fathers also unassailably claimed) that Sacred Scripture is the source of what the teachers of secular letters afterwards transferred to their field. I have (if I am not mistaken) demonstrated this as occasion arose to the best of my ability with the Lord's aid.⁶⁹

3. The short book of Athanasius, bishop of Alexandria, that he sent to Marcellinus as a sweet refreshment after his illness ought also to be read. It is called *On the Book of Psalms*.⁷⁰ In it he gives various kinds of advice and

64 Hilary, *Tractatus super psalmos* [CPL 428] (CSEL 22). English translation (Psalms 1, 54, 130): NPNF 2nd ser. 9 (1898), 326–48.

65 Ambrose, *Explanatio super psalmos xii* [CPL 140] (CSEL 64); *Expositio de psalmo cxviii* [CPL 141] (CSEL 62).

66 Jerome, *Commentarioli in psalmos* [CPL 582] (CCSL 72.163–245); *Tractatus lix in psalmos* [CPL 592] (CCSL 78.3–352). English translation: FOTC 48 (1964); *Tractatum in psalmos series altera* [CPL 593] (CCSL 78.353–447). English translation: FOTC 57 (1966), 3–117.

67 Augustine, *Enarrationes in Psalmos* [CPL 283] (CCSL 38–40). English translation: Library of the Fathers vols 8–13 (1847–1857); 1–37 (ACW 29–30 [1960–1961]).

68 Cassiodorus' comment, 'ex quibus iam duas decades Domino praestante collegi' was probably, as Cappuyns (1380) and van de Vyver, 'Cassiodore' (270, fn. 1) and 'Institutiones' (80) correctly interpret, a gloss on the first part of the sentence, which was misplaced in the copying. What Cassiodorus means is that he has succeeded at the time of writing this chapter of the *Institutiones* in bringing together some commentaries of the first mentioned Fathers – which is in accord with the fragmentary tradition of these commentaries – on some twenty psalms. Cassiodorus cannot be referring, as O'Donnell, *Cassiodorus*, 138) and H. Thiele (381) suggest, to Augustine's commentary, since he had used the entire commentary of Augustine in composing his *Explanation of the Psalms* (cf. Praefatio 10–28 [CCSL 97.3]. English translation: ACW 51 (1990), 23.

69 Cassiodorus, *Exp. Ps.* 'Notae' (CCSL 97.2); Praefatio 15.65–104. English translation: ACW 51 (1990), 38f.

70 Athanasius, *Epistula ad Marcellinum* [CPG 2097] (PG 27.12–45). Cf. Cassiodorus,

reveals the excellence of that work in an edifying discussion that comfortably mentions the various misfortunes of mankind and their remedies. The Psalter appears like a heavenly sphere thick with twinkling stars and, so to speak, like a beautiful peacock that is adorned with round eyes and a rich and lovely variety of colors. The Psalter is indeed a paradise for souls, containing numberless fruits on which the human soul is sweetly fed and fattened.⁷¹

4. I have decided that this entire collection of Psalms ought to be put in three volumes of fifty psalms each so that the triple number of the jubilee year⁷² might signify to you the gift of remission desired from the Holy Trinity. A single volume containing all the psalms might prove too burdensome for some brothers. With the Lord's aid many may find a shortened form of the book beneficial to their salvation and may receive the hope of precious salvation when the work is divided in such a way. Have in your library then one book of all the Psalms for reference if perchance the text strikes you as erroneous. But the interest of the brothers may be served by the divided sections.⁷³

V. Solomon

1. **Proverbs.** The fourth section <of the Bible> is that of Solomon whose first book is called Proverbs. I found this book divided into four parts, so I decided that something should be noted on these parts in the prologue to this book so that such summaries may briefly clarify its purpose.⁷⁴

2. I have found Didymus, a commentator⁷⁵ on this book in Greek and it has been carefully translated into Latin by my learned friend Epiphanius⁷⁶

Exp.Ps. Praefatio 16 (CCSL 97.22.31–37), who translates *PG* 27.24A–B. English translation (of the Cassiodoran section): ACW 51 (1990), 41.

⁷¹ Cassiodorus, *Exp.Ps.* Praefatio (CCSL 97.4.41–43). English translation: ACW 51 (1990), 24.

⁷² Every fiftieth year (see Leviticus 25:8–17).

⁷³ The majority of MSS of the *Exp.Ps.* are transmitted in three codices with independent incipits and explicits. The passage in the *Praefatio* to that work referring to this division (CCSL 97.3.32–4.38) is an addition to the commentary added after the writing of *Institutiones* 1.

⁷⁴ Cassiodorus uses *codex*, *liber*, and *volumen* here. *Codex* refers to the entire section of the Bible containing the Books of Solomon, viz. the Book of Proverbs (divided into four parts), Ecclesiastes, the Song of Songs, the Book of Wisdom, and Ecclesiasticus. *Liber* and *volumen* here both refer to the Book of Proverbs.

⁷⁵ Didymus, *Fragmenta in Proverbia* [CPG 2552] (*PG* 39.1621–1645).

⁷⁶ *Epiphanius Scholasticus (*PLRE* IIIA [1994], 446) translated the work, but it is no longer extant. For the work of Epiphanius, see Brünholzl, 47–48, 242.

with God's aid. Didymus, though blind in the flesh, was, as blessed Antony, the Father of Monks justly remarked, one who saw with prophetic light, since he had seen in his perceptive heart what he could not see with ordinary sight.⁷⁷ For it is wonderful how learned in so many disciplines and arts⁷⁸ he was simply by hearing, since, deprived of physical vision, he was unable even to look at the shapes of the letters. This seemed to me almost impossible, I confess, when I read of it, except that there happened to come to us from Asia a man by the name of Eusebius who said that he had been blind since the age of five. His left eye had been hollowed out and the deep socket showed; the right eyeball was obscured by a glassy appearance and rolled in useless movements without the power of seeing. He had placed such great authors and such great books in the library of his memory that he would accurately advise the reader in what part of the book a passage he had recommended might be found. He kept in his mind all branches of learning and elucidated them by the clearest commentary. He also advised us that the tabernacle and temple of the Lord were shaped like the celestial vault.⁷⁹ I have placed suitable pictures of them, their proper contours carefully painted, in the Latin Bible pandect in the larger format.⁸⁰ He also connected priestly dress with several mysteries of the Lord and stated that nothing was placed <in Scripture> without purpose or without carrying a beautiful symbol of something else. He also stated that Josephus, Origen, and Jerome had made the same point in their books. In short, he made the story of Didymus believable by his own example. Acting under Eusebius' direction I also found many ancient books that were unknown in my circle. Yet he is still held in the error of the Novatianist heresy. With the support of the mercy of the Lord I believe that he will be filled with the light of the true faith so that the One who enabled him to learn his scriptures by his mind may bid him to become strong in the wholeness of the orthodox faith.

3. **Ecclesiastes.** The second book of Solomon which is called Ecclesiastes was vigorously commented on by the blessed Jerome.⁸¹ Jerome calls him the 'Preacher' in Latin because he speaks to the people, and his discussion is directed not to anyone in particular, but to all in general. Our

77 On Antony and Didymus: Socrates, *Historia ecclesiastica* [CPG 6028] 4.25 (PG 67.526–27; cf. Cassiodorus–Epiphanius, *Historia ecclesiastica tripartita* 8.8.5 (CSEL 71.479)).

78 For 'disciplines and arts' see *Inst.* 1.preface, n. 76, above.

79 Eusebius, a Novatianist (heretic), otherwise unknown.

80 For the illustrations in the *codex grandior* and their relation to illustrations in the Codex Amiatinus, see now Meyvaert, 'Bede, Cassiodorus'.

81 Jerome, *Commentarius in Ecclesiasticen* [CPL 583] (CCSL 72.147–361).

Ecclesiastes is the Lord Christ 'he it is who has made both one and has broken down the intervening wall of the enclosure, destroying in his own person the hostility of the flesh' [Ephesians 2:14]. He says that the divine commandments are to be followed above all, warning that all the things of this world are the 'vanity of the vain' [Ecclesiastes 1:2]. Victorinus, first a rhetorician and then a bishop, wrote a certain amount on this book.⁸²

4. **The Song of Songs.** On the Song of Songs, St Jerome, great propagator of the Latin language, also attended to our interests by his translation, admirable as usual, of the two sermons of Origen commenting on it.⁸³ And this Rufinus, too, an eloquent translator, expounded more fully in three books by adding some sections up to that precept 'Catch us the little foxes that damage the vineyards' [Song of Songs 2:15].⁸⁴ After them, Epiphanius, bishop of Cyprus, treated the whole book in one brief volume in Greek.⁸⁵ I have had this book like others translated into Latin with the Lord's aid by my learned friend Epiphanius.⁸⁶ I have, therefore, included these most careful commentators on this book in a single volume so that all extant writers on this particular text should be available to readers together. Note also that St Ambrose in the third book of his *Patriarchs*, where he talks of the figure of Isaac, discusses many passages in a beneficial and pleasant way.⁸⁷

5. **Book of Wisdom.** Father Jerome, who has been often spoken of, also claimed that the Book of Wisdom is not by Solomon as is commonly believed, but was written by a certain learned Jew named Philo.⁸⁸ He designates this book as a pseudepigraph because it usurps the name of another. The priest Bellator stated that he himself undertook a commentary on this volume in eight books and I keep this work together with his other shorter works.⁸⁹

82 *Victorinus of Pettau: Cassiodorus confuses him (rhetorician, then bishop) with Marius Victorinus. His commentary on Ecclesiastes (mentioned by Jerome, *De viris ill.* 74) is not extant; see Herzog-Schmidt, para. 573.

83 Origen, *In Canticum Canticorum homiliae ii* (Latin, trans. Jerome) [CPG 1432] (GCS 33.27–60; SChr 37bis). English translation: ACW 26 (1957), 265–305.

84 Origen, *Libri x in Canticum Canticorum* (Latin: *libri i–iv*, trans. Rufinus) [CPG 1433] (GCS 33.61–241). English translation: ACW 26 (1957), 21–263.

85 Epiphanius of Cyprus (= Philo of Carpasia), *Enarratio in Canticum Canticorum* [CPG 3810] (PG 40.28–153).

86 Epiphanius Scholasticus, translator of Philo of Carpasia (see n. 76 above). See Ceresa-Gastaldo.

87 Ambrose, *De Isaac uel anima* [CPL 128] (CSEL 32.1.641–700). English translation: FOTC 65 (1965), 10–65.

88 Jerome, *Prologus in libris Salomonis*, BSV, 957.

89 *Bellator's work is not extant.

Father Augustine⁹⁰ and St Ambrose⁹¹ have written much in the form of sermons; it is a most sweet text which is truly resplendent in the worthiness of its name.

6. **Ecclesiasticus.** As for the Book of Ecclesiasticus, Jerome also relates that it was written by Jesus son of Sirach who can be called in Latin the ‘Assembler’.⁹² The Fathers have differentiated Ecclesiastes and Ecclesiasticus by stating that Ecclesiastes refers only to Christ the Lord while Ecclesiasticus can be applied completely to any just preacher who generally gathers the assembly of the Lord by his most holy admonitions. Clearly this is the effect of this present book that Jerome called *panaretus* (‘all-virtuous’, i.e., filled with all the virtues) and it is so clear and well-rendered in Latin that the text seems to be a commentary on itself. May it be fulfilled in the nature of our actions as easily as it is quickly grasped by our mind.

7. With the Lord’s aid I have taken care to mark the chapter-headings on these books so that in such indispensable reading, as I have often said, the inexperienced beginner may not be left in confusion.

VI. Hagiographa⁹³

1. **Job.** The sixth section, that of the Hagiographa, follows. It has eight books, containing first Job, an outstanding and glorious model of patience. As in many other cases, the labour of blessed Jerome⁹⁴ has given in the Latin language a careful translation and commentary. And moreover, in Jerome’s commentaries we learn that, as the Lord himself deigned to bear witness of him, all Job’s complaints were blameless [Job 42:7].

2. How many sweet verbal mysteries that book contains! As blessed Jerome says in the epistle he wrote to Paulinus:⁹⁵ ‘Job begins in prose, slips into verse, ends in prose, and fixes everything by the laws of dialectic in major and minor premise, corroboration, and conclusion.’ But if this is true – and it must be as the authority of so great a man sets it down – where are those who say that the art of dialectic did not begin from most Holy Scripture?

90 Augustine’s sermons on Liber Sapientiae are not part of his sermons on the OT.

91 *Ambrose’s sermons on the Book of Wisdom are not extant.

92 Jerome (see n. 88, above).

93 For the term, see above *Inst.* 1.3.4, n. 58.

94 For Jerome’s translation, see *BSV*, 731ff. No commentary by Jerome is extant.

95 Jerome, *Ep. 53 ad Paulinum* 8 (CSEL 54.455). The text of Jerome of Hilberg in CSEL differs slightly from Cassiodorus’ quotation: *omniaque legis dialecticae* (Mynors 26.1–2)] *omnisque dialecticae proponit lemmata*.

‘Each of the words in it is filled with holy allegories, utterances, and problems, and, to pass over everything else in silence, the book foretells the resurrection of the flesh so well that no one seems to have written anything on this subject more clearly or more carefully. For thus it says: “I know that my Redeemer lives, and in the last day I shall rise out of the earth. And I shall be clothed again with my skin, and in my flesh shall I see God; whom I myself shall see and my eyes behold, and not another. This my hope is placed in my bosom”’ [Job 19:25-27].

3. St Augustine also glossing the same book⁹⁶ treated it with his usual care for detail. There is a chapter-by-chapter commentary on this book by an anonymous author whose style leads me to believe that it is the work of blessed Hilary.⁹⁷ If you read it attentively it can instruct you carefully. Clearly the Book of Job is a magnificent book written for the solace and benefit of the human race, since it shows that a holy man endured such manifold sufferings so that every sinner should make light of the sufferings he himself experiences.

4. **Tobit, Esther, Judith, Maccabees.** The priest Bellator to the best of his ability composed in Latin commentaries on the following: Tobit, five books; Esther, six books; Judith, seven books; Maccabees, ten books.⁹⁸

5. I have collected the chapter summaries of these books since I think that there is added benefit in instruction when information spread widely throughout the books is concentrated in a few words.⁹⁹ For by devices like this the reader’s mind is led in and incited to read through the beneficent sequence of Scripture. Nevertheless, recognize that these books, although they are historical and are based on a clear narration, have been written with regard to the most excellent moral virtues to fill our minds properly with patience, hope, charity, and courage, even in women, with a life, on God’s behalf, scornful of the present world and with all the other virtues that have flourished in this world with the Lord’s grace.

96 Augustine, *Adnotationes in Iob* [CPL 271] (CSEL 28.2.509–628).

97 Hilary of Poitiers, *Tractatus in Iob* (fragments in Augustine, *Contra Julianum* 2.27, Pelagius in Augustine, *De natura* 72, Acta Concilii Toletani 4.10) [CPL 429] (CSEL 65.229–231). The work Cassiodorus refers to may not be by Hilary, but a translation and adaptation of Origen’s *Homiliae in Iob* that is extant only in fragments [CPG 1424].

98 *Bellator’s commentaries on Tobit, Esther, Judith, and Maccabees are no longer extant.

99 Cassiodorus, *Liber titulorum* = *Liber memorialis*. This was a collection of summary *capitula*, covering the whole of Scripture (cf. Cassiodorus, *Orth.* 6.144 GLK: ‘post librum quoque titulorum quem de divina scriptura collectum memorialem volui nuncupari ...’). This work has not come down to us, but Cappuyns believes that it can be reconstructed by means of the *capitulationes* of the Codex Amiatinus (Cappuyns, 1375, 1383).

6. **Esdras, Maccabees.** I have found Origen's single expository sermons in Greek on the two books of Esdras that have been translated by that devout man Bellator.¹⁰⁰ St Ambrose in *The Patriarchs*, where he speaks of Joseph, cites the second book of Maccabees as an example.¹⁰¹ He has interpreted by the sweet clearness of his eloquence the greatest part of this book as praise of the virtue of endurance. With the Lord's aid, my friend Bellator has put together a painstaking commentary on the Books of the Maccabees so that such a great text filled with so many examples of manly behaviour should not risk being left unexplained.

VII. Gospels

1. The seventh section of Divine Scripture, the first of the New Testament, that gave us a holy birth to worship and life-giving redemption, shines with the heavenly light of the four evangelists. St Jerome investigated what is peculiar to each, and discussed these books with great attention; I included this in one volume so that the reader's keenness might not be slowed down by separate volumes.¹⁰² On the Gospel of Matthew there is another commentary in four books by St Jerome,¹⁰³ and by St Hilary in one book.¹⁰⁴ Victorinus, too, who became a bishop after being a rhetorician, has written extensively on it.¹⁰⁵ St Ambrose marvellously expounded Luke.¹⁰⁶ Blessed Augustine elucidated John in a full and outstanding commentary.¹⁰⁷ He also assembled four books *On the Agreement of the Evangelists* with an important and critical discussion.¹⁰⁸

2. Eusebius of Caesarea also collected the Gospel canons in a brief summary. He has accurately distinguished those passages in which the

100 *Origen's *Homiliae in Esdram* are not extant, nor is Bellator's translation.

101 Ambrose, *De Ioseph* [CPL 131] (CSEL 32.2.73–122). English translation: FOTC 65 (1972), 189–237.

102 *Jerome's commentary on the four Gospels is not extant; the work that goes under his name is an Irish commentary of s. vii2 [CPL 631]. See also Frede, 536f.

103 Jerome, *Commentarii in Euangelium Matthaei* [CPL 590] (CCSL 77).

104 Hilary, *Commentarius in Euangelium Matthaei* [CPL 430]. SChr 254, 258 (Paris, 1979).

105 *The commentary on Matthew by Marius Victorinus is not extant.

106 Ambrose, *Expositio Euangelii secundum Lucam* [CPL 143] (CCSL 14. 1–400).

107 Augustine, *Tractatus in Euangelium Ioannis* [CPL 278] (CCSL 36). English translation: FOTC 78–79, 88, 90. 92.3–94 (1988–1995).

108 Augustine, *De consensu evangelistarum* [CPL 273] (CSEL 43). English translation: LNPF ser. 1 6 (1888), 77–236.

evangelists report the same things from those in which they discuss matters peculiar to each.¹⁰⁹ A work in which fullness of faith flourishes, alongside the marvellous teaching of the different evangelists.

VIII. Apostolic Letters

1. The eighth section contains the canonical epistles of the Apostles. On the thirteen epistles of St Paul I found, at the beginning of my reading, glosses that are so widely known that learned men have in their enthusiasm said that they were written by St Gelasius, the pope. This sort of thing often happens when men wish to protect faulty material by the authority of an illustrious name. Earlier reading and careful reconsideration showed me that these writings display subtle concise language, but that the poison of the Pelagian error is sowed in them; therefore, to keep this heretical error far from you I have revised the first epistle (to the Romans)¹¹⁰ with every possible care and I have left the rest written down in a papyrus book¹¹¹ to be emended by you.

109 Eusebius of Caesarea, Gospel canons (*PG* 22.1275–1292). These canons, or, more clearly, sections, were devised by the Greek Church Father Eusebius of Caesarea (c. AD 263–339/40). These tables function as a kind of Gospel harmony by pointing out to the reader parallel passages in two or more Gospels. Eusebius began by dividing the Gospels into brief consecutively numbered sections. These sections, which are not the same as the modern chapters and verses, can be found in the margins of the four Gospels in *BSV*, 1527ff. Eusebius then arranged the ten canon tables with these sections, divided up as follows: Canon I. Passages found in all four Gospels; II. in Matthew, Mark, and Luke (the synoptic Gospels); III. in Matthew, Luke, and John; IV. in Matthew, Mark, and John; V. in Matthew and Luke; VI. in Matthew and Mark; VII. in Matthew and John; VIII. in Luke and Mark; IX. in Luke and John; X. those found in only one Gospel: Matthew first, Mark second, Luke third, and John fourth. The reader uses these tables together with the sections in the Gospel text to know at a glance what the parallel passages are. St Jerome took over this system from the Greek for his Latin translation of the Gospels, and can be found now printed in *BSV*, 1516–1526. St Jerome's prefatory letter to Pope Damasus (*BSV*, 1516) explains their use. Canon tables in medieval manuscripts are often richly decorated. For examples from Anglo-Saxon art, see Backhouse, pls. 21 and 22 (pp. 37, 38). The marginal numbers within the Gospels can be seen, e.g., in pl. 8 (p. 18), a page of the Gospel of Matthew containing part of the Sermon on the Mount.

110 Pelagius–Cassiodorus, *Expositio S. Pauli Epistulae ad Romanos, una cum complex-ionibus in xii sequentes S. Pauli epistulas a quodam Cassiodori discipulo anonymo concinnatis* [*CPL* 902] (*PL* 68.413–686). See also Johnson.

111 It is not clear why Cassiodorus decided to have this material put into a papyrus codex. It is certainly not because papyrus was less durable than parchment. Indeed, codices of papyrus from the time of Cassiodorus are still extant (Paris BN lat 8913 +8914; *CLA* 5.573, *Homilies and Letters of Avitus, Bishop of Vienne*, s. vi). Since the text involved was a revision of an earlier treatise, Cassiodorus may have thought it best to be kept in the form of notes, not a final

This will be an easy matter for once an example has been set, a follower can more confidently imitate.

2. Deeply distressed amidst these troubles I found an anonymous annotated codex given to us by divine foresight that offers valuable glosses to the thirteen epistles of St Paul.¹¹² This book, if gone through carefully, will give you a second safe commentary with the Lord's bounty.

3. On the Epistle to the Hebrews, I have had Mutianus, a scholarly writer, translate into Latin the thirty-four sermons that John, bishop of Constantinople wrote in excellent Greek,¹¹³ so that the entire sequence of the letters would not be broken off suddenly by a clumsy conclusion.

4. On the canonical epistles Clement of Alexandria, a priest (also called Stromateus), has written some things in excellent Greek – i.e., on I Peter, on I and II John, and on James.¹¹⁴ In these works he discusses many subjects carefully but others carelessly. I have had these translated into Latin and cleaned up by the removal of some of their errors,¹¹⁵ so that his teaching can be drawn on more safely.

5. St Augustine also treated the letter of the apostle James with his usual meticulous diligence.¹¹⁶ I have left a copy of this to you in a parchment book.

6. When deep concern about the remaining canonical epistles was troubling me, I suddenly obtained by the bounty of the Lord a copy of Didymus, written in Greek containing a commentary on the seven canonical epistles. This has been translated with divine aid by the scholar Epiphanius.¹¹⁷

7. St Augustine has written much wonderful material on Christian love

book text. Indeed, it may well have been written in the usual script of such notes, a kind of cursive minuscule, like the 'later half-uncial' (Bischoff's term; E.A. Lowe's 'quarter-uncial'), used in grammatical texts such as those of Probus and Sacerdos (Naples Biblioteca Nazionale lat 2; CLA 3.397a, 398) and in scholia (as in the Bembine Terence, Vatican City BAV lat 3226, CLA 1.12). See Bischoff, *Latin Palaeography*, 8, 75f., 104.

112 Ambrosiaster, *Commentarius in xiii epistulas Paulinas* [CPL 184] (CSEL 81.1–3).

113 John Chrysostom, *In epistulam ad Hebraeos argumentum et homiliae 1–34* [CPG 4440] (PG 63.9–236). Latin version of Mutianus: PG 63.237–456. Cf. E.A. Lowe.

114 *Clement of Alexandria's *Adumbrationes in epistolas canonicas* are not extant in Greek (see n. 115, below).

115 Clement of Alexandria, *Adumbrationes in epistolas canonicas* in an anonymous Latin translation (GCS 17.2, 2nd ed., 203–215). Cf. H.J. Frede, 256.

116 *Augustine (On the Epistle of James): listed in the *Elenchus* of Possidius X3.10 and *Retractationes* 2.32 (58) (*Expositio epistulae ad duodecim tribus*) [CPL 250] (CCSL 57.116), but not extant. See Wilmart, 'Operum', 179, 217.

117 Didymus, *In epistulas catholicas brevis enarratio* [CPG 2562]. Zoepfl: the Latin version of Epiphanius Scholasticus with the Greek fragments reprinted from PG 39.1749–1818.

in the ten sermons on I John.¹¹⁸

8. I have found a third copy of the letters of St Paul that some say contains brief glosses of St Jerome¹¹⁹ and I have also left this to you through the bounty of Christ.

9. After these three commentaries of equal value that I have spoken about, Peter, the abbot of the province of Tripoli, is said to have annotated the epistles of St Paul with examples from the short works of the blessed Augustine.¹²⁰ He declares the secret of his own heart with the tongue of another and he has fitted these examples so suitably to individual passages that you might think that the whole had been accomplished rather by the effort of blessed Augustine. For it is remarkable that one author has elucidated the text from another commentator in such a way that he seems to have expressed the desires of his own heart without adding a word of his own. This, among other books, is to be sent to you, if Divine Grace so grants, from the region of Africa.¹²¹

10. So the whole arrangement of the canonical epistles, those of St Paul and of the other apostles, under the guidance of the Lord, has been completed. It is reported also that blessed Ambrose left an annotated version of all the epistles of St Paul filled with his own satisfying commentary;¹²² up to now, however, I have not been able to find this work but I am looking for it assiduously.

11. I have spoken about the brief glosses on the Epistles that some have written. Now following my usual order, as I did for the Prophets, let me speak of those who preferred to treat of these letters more fully. Thus the first works listed are suitable for beginners, what follows is designated for those who are trained.

12. The first of the letters of St Paul and a rather remarkable one is the letter to the Romans. Origen discussed this letter in twenty books in Greek. Rufinus has reduced this work to ten books, and fully translated it into Latin.¹²³ St Augustine began to write a commentary on the same letter.¹²⁴ He

118 Augustine, *In Ioannis epistulam ad Parthos tractatus x* [CPL 279] (PL 35.1977–2062). English translation: FOTC 92 (1955), 119–277.

119 *Jerome's *Glosses on the Epistles of Paul* are not extant.

120 Peter of Tripoli: cf. the material cited in CPL 360. Wilmart, 'Le mythe'.

121 Cf. *Inst.* 1.29.2.

122 *Ambrose's *Annotationes in epistulas Pauli* are not extant.

123 Origen, *Commentarii in Epistulam ad Romanos* (Latin, trans. Rufinus, 10 books). [CPG 1457.1] (PG 14.833–1292).

124 Augustine, *Epistulae ad Romanos Incohata Expositio* [CPL 281] (CSEL 84.143–81).

mentions that he had completed one book on the salutation alone and to use his words, 'frightened by the greatness of the work itself and by the toil, [he] turned to other easier tasks'.¹²⁵ In writing to Simplicianus, bishop of Milan, he also dealt with some of the lofty and remarkable problems of the same epistle.¹²⁶ I have decided to insert his discussion in the book I just spoke of [viz. Origen–Rufinus] so that the reader will not experience unprofitable delays, trying to find a separate commentary.

13. St Augustine also interpreted the letter to the Galatians¹²⁷ more broadly and St Jerome extended his commentary on it to three books. St Jerome also carefully explained the letter to the Ephesians in three other books. He included in one volume a commentary on Titus and he also explained Philemon in one book.¹²⁸

14. St Jerome is said to have written commentaries on the rest of the epistles of St Paul – i.e., on I and II Corinthians, on I and II Thessalonians, on Colossians, and on I and II Timothy;¹²⁹ from them a great deal of knowledge can be gained when it shall be granted to the ignorant to see what they are seeking. But I trust that by the mercy of the Lord I shall shortly locate these commentaries of Jerome in the various regions where I have directed inquiry. Thus we ought to preserve carefully what we know should be sent to us; and so, if any of you come on them by chance before they arrive here, take care to have them carefully transcribed and added to the aforesaid commentators. In this way, the library of your monastery will grow with the Lord's aid and by your efforts through which such great foundations have been laid for it. But if before this work is completed, my old age passes on, at the order of the Lord, to the desired end, with remission of my sins (for which I ask that you pray), it is to you, I trust, that some time in the future this material that we await will come.

15. I have left the commentary of John Chrysostom on the above-mentioned epistles in excellent Greek¹³⁰ in the eighth bookcase I spoke of,

125 Augustine, *Retractationes* 1.25 (24) [CPL 250] (CCSL 57.73–74). English translation: FOTC 60 (1968), 104–06.

126 Augustine, *De diversis quaestionibus ad Simplicianum* 1 (CCSL 44.7–56). English translation: L. Burleigh, *Early Writings*, Philadelphia–London, 1955, 370–406.

127 Augustine, *Epistulae ad Galatas Expositio* [CPL 282] (CSEL 84.53–141).

128 Jerome, *Commentarii in IV Epistulas Paulinas* (*ad Galatas, ad Ephesios, ad Titum, ad Philemonem*) [CPL 591] (PL 26.307–618 [331–656]).

129 *Jerome's commentaries on I–II Corinthians, I–II Thessalonians, Colossians, I–II Timothy are not extant.

130 John Chrysostom, *In epistulam I ad Corinthios argumentum et homiliae 1–44; In Epistulam II ad Corinthios argumentum et homiliae 1–30; In Epistulam ad Colossenses homiliae*

which houses the Greek books.¹³¹ If fuller Latin commentaries cannot be found, translate from this commentary what can offer the fullest knowledge. In this way all seventy-one canonical books (the number known to be understood by the holy Father Augustine) may have commentaries of the earlier writers through the Lord's bounty, and there, like the spiritual fruits of Paradise, may be offered for enjoyment at your banquets.

16. But if on these matters I have spoken of, some passages should be left in doubt and these doubts cannot be answered by full commentaries, I do not at all forbid you the use of later commentators,¹³² though you should look carefully for orthodox ones; for in the passage of time the divine grace that may have been hidden from the earlier teachers, has recently been bestowed on many.

IX. Acts of the Apostles and the Apocalypse

1. The ninth section is known to contain the Acts of the Apostles and the Apocalypse. The Apocalypse, i.e., Revelation, is also said to be the work of the apostle John. For the Acts of the Apostles I have found commentaries in Greek by John, bishop of Constantinople. My friends, with the Lord's aid, have translated these in two volumes of fifty-five sermons.¹³³

2. The Apocalypse assiduously leads the mind of the reader to heavenly contemplation and causes him to understand through the mind's eye what makes the angels blessed through actual sight; it becomes clear in the commentary of St Jerome.¹³⁴ Victorinus, the oft-mentioned bishop, has briefly treated some difficult passages of this book also.¹³⁵ Vigilius, an African bishop, also discussed fully and carefully the sense of the thousand years

1–12; In *Epistulam I ad Thessalonicenses homiliae 1–11*; In *Epistulam II ad Thessalonicenses homiliae 1–5*; In *Epistulam I ad Timotheum argumentum et homiliae 1–18*; In *Epistulam II ad Timotheum homiliae 1–10* [CPG 4428, 4429, 4433, 4434, 4435, 4436, 4437] (F. Field, *Ioannis Chrysostomi interpretatio omnium epistularum Paulinarum*, Oxford 1845–62, vols 2, 3, 5, 6).

131 In fact, Cassiodorus only speaks of the eighth bookcase in Chapter XIV. See below, 1.14.4 and n. 156. Courcelle, *Late Latin Writers*, 337f.

132 Or 'modern (*modernus*) commentators'; see introduction n. 10.

133 John Chrysostom, *In Acta Apostolorum homiliae 1–55* [CPG 4426] (PG 60.13–384); *the Latin translation mentioned by Cassiodorus is not extant.

134 Pseudo-Jerome, *Commentarius in Apocalypsin* [CPL 1221]; also attributed to Isidore of Seville, but probably by neither of them. See Bischoff, 'Turning-points', 143f.

135 Victorinus of Pettau, *Commentarii in Apocalypsim Ioannis* [CPL 80] (CSEL 49.11–154).

that is mentioned in the Apocalypse¹³⁶ and that has become a great problem for some.

3. Tyconius the Donatist also added some unobjectionable material on this book, but he contaminated some of it with the foul teachings of his poisonous belief;¹³⁷ where appropriate I have affixed the *chresimon* ('useful') on the approved statements and on all unacceptable statements I found in reading through it, I have fixed the mark of disapproval, the *achriston*.¹³⁸ I urge you to do likewise on suspect commentators so that the reader will not be bewildered by the admixture of unacceptable teachings.

4. St Augustine in his *City of God* also elucidated many matters in an outstanding and careful manner.¹³⁹ In our time also, the blessed Primasius, bishop of Africa, has commented on the Apocalypse in five books with minute and diligent attention.¹⁴⁰ To these he added one book of careful discussion called *What Makes a Heretic*.¹⁴¹ Let these books be offered in the temple of the Lord as holy offerings on the sacred altars.

5. But since I have spoken of the commentators – as many of the earlier ones as I could find or those I have had translated by my friends from the Greek or had composed from scratch – let us now say something about the

136 Vigilius, bishop of Thapsus [CPL 806]. I cannot locate any specific work in which he discusses the thousand years in Revelation (Apoc. 20). [His works: PL 62.95–154; 179–238; 333–51].

137 *Tyconius, *Commentarius in Apocalypsin* [CPL 710]. The work is lost and we know it only from the authors who used it: Primasius, Bede, and especially Beatus. An orthodox reworking of part of his text can be found in the Turin fragment (s. x1); Lo Bue.

138 *Chresimon* and *achriston*: the symbol placed in the margin of an ancient book (papyrus or parchment) standing for *chresis* ('passage') or, more likely, *chreston* ('useful') (*chresimon* here and in Isidore, *Etym.* 1.21.22 [*C<h>risimon* in Lindsay's edition]) takes the form of the Greek letter chi surmounted by the Greek letter rho. This looks like the chi-rho symbol for Christ that is in common usage in Christianity. Its original purpose was to mark noteworthy passages. We find it in papyrus fragments (e.g., London BM Pap 3036, s. ii AD, Sophocles, *Theseus*; Turner, 27) Cassiodorus uses it as well in his marginal 'notes' in the *Exp.Ps.* to indicate 'necessary dogmas' (CCSL 97.2). We have no knowledge of the form of the *achriston* symbol, used by Cassiodorus to mark heretical doctrine. It is possible that it took the form of the *obelos*, a marginal mark that looks like our slash (/), marking a passage worth looking into, but we have no way of being sure, since Cassiodorus does not employ this mark in extant material. See also McNamee, 17f., 21f.

139 Augustine, *Civ.* [CPL 313], esp. 20.7–17. (CCSL 48.708–729). English translation: FOTC 24 (1954), 265–94.

140 Primasius of Hadrumantum, *Commentarius in Apocalypsin* [CPL 873] (CCSL 92).

141 Primasius of Hadrumantum, *Quid haereticum facit* (fragment in Cassiodorus *Exp.Ps.* 138) [CPL 873a] (CCSL 98.1255; cf. 1060).

six kinds of understanding so that by frequently referring to them we may avoid the plagues of error.

X. The Types of Understanding

1. After reading this work, our first concern should be to consider introductory manuals to Divine Scripture that I previously found, i.e., Tyconius the Donatist, St. Augustine *On Christian Learning*, Adrian, Eucherius, and Junilius.¹⁴² I have acquired their works with great care, and have united and gathered them into one collection since they have a similar purpose. By arranging the rules of usage to elucidate the text, and by comparisons of various examples, they have clarified what was hitherto obscure.

2. But if writers of introductory works happen to have omitted something, then we should seek carefully for commentators on the books to reveal to us what was obscure before.

3. Then we should read assiduously the orthodox teachers who have solved the most difficult problems by systematic reasoning.

4. Fifth,¹⁴³ specific passages mentioned as illustrations in the individual books and letters of the different Fathers ought to be annotated with great care. This method offers the most useful approach possible to reading the different orthodox Fathers since they gracefully reveal their purposes and, by their discussion of problems incidental to their main subject, make a great deal of knowledge available to us.

5. Finally, seek frequent discussion with learned elders; for in conversation with them we suddenly realize what we had not even imagined while they transmit eagerly to us the knowledge they have gained in their long years. It is useful to go through these six types of learning eagerly and willingly rather than grow dull in irreligious torpor.

¹⁴² *Liber introductorius*: this introductory manual contained the following texts: Tyconius, *Liber regularum* [CPL 709] (*Texts and Studies* 3.1 [1894]); Augustine, *Doct. Chr.* [CPL 263] (CCSL 32.1–167); Hadrianus, *Isagoge in sacras scripturas* (Greek) [CPG 6527] (Goessling, 70–135 [Greek text and German translation]); Eucherius, *Formulae spiritalis intelligentiae* [CPL 488] (CSEL 31.3–62); Iunillus, *Instituta regularia divinae legis* (see *Inst.* 1.1 (fn. 2)), 465–528 Kihn.

¹⁴³ Although this is the fourth paragraph of the chapter, the count is correct, since the first paragraph includes two aids to understanding Christian teaching: 1) the reading of this work (viz. *Institutiones*); 2) the reading of the *liber introductorius*.

XI. The Four Accepted Councils

1. Now consider how the universal and holy councils have established the saving mysteries of our faith so that we may avoid deadly errors by learning from them the hidden truths of our religion. We read that the Council of Nicaea was the first convened, then the Council of Constantinople, third Ephesus I, fourth, Chalcedon. These are the councils that the Holy Church approves with good reason. These Councils brought such great illumination to our faith that we ought not to crash in intellectual blindness against the rocks of any heresy, as long as we are guarded by the care of the Lord. At those councils the most holy fathers, tolerating no infringement of the true faith, decided then and there to establish ecclesiastical rules and to strike down the stubborn inventors of new heresies with the divine sword. They decided that no one on his own ought to introduce new problems, but should rest content with the authority of the approved elders and obey without malice or treachery the decrees promoting our spiritual well-being. For there are many who think that it is praiseworthy to hold opinions contrary to those of the ancients or to discover some new thing by which they may appear learned.

2. The Codex Encyclius¹⁴⁴ bears witness to the Council of Chalcedon and praises the reverence of that council so highly that it judges that the council ought to be compared to sacred authority. I have had the complete collection of letters translated by the erudite scholar Epiphanius from Greek into Latin.¹⁴⁵

3. But now that I have collected the Holy Scripture in nine sections together with the introductory writers and with almost all Latin commentators, so far as it was possible with the Lord's aid, let us see how the holy law has been divided in three different ways by the different Fathers. The Church of all regions accepts this law as a whole, nevertheless, in a respectful and harmonious way.

144 Codex Encyclius: see Courcelle, *Late Latin Writers*, 383f. The CE was a compilation of episcopal letters that had been requested by the Emperor Leo for the defence of the Council of Chalcedon and was put together at his command. The translation made for Cassiodorus is extant in two manuscripts, Paris BN lat 12098 (s. ix) and Vienna NB 397 (s. ix/x).

145 Epiphanius Scholasticus: see above, *Inst.* 1.5.2, n. 76. For the Latin translation of the Codex Encyclius (the Greek is no longer extant), see Schwartz, 2.5 (1936), 1–98.

XII. The Division of Divine Scripture according to St Jerome

1. The divine authority in two Testaments is divided according to St Jerome¹⁴⁶ as follows:

In the Old Testament. The Law: Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy. Prophets: Joshua, Judges, Ruth, Samuel, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Book of Twelve Prophets. Hagiographa: Job, David, Solomon (Proverbs, Ecclesiasticus, Song of Songs), Chronicles (i.e., Paralipomenon), Esdras, Esther. In the New Testament. Gospels: Matthew, Mark, Luke, John. Epistles: Paul 14, Peter 2, John 3, James 1, Jude 1. Acts of the Apostles. One book on the Apocalypse.¹⁴⁷

2. It must be clearly understood that St Jerome edited and corrected the works of different translators because he saw that they did not at all agree with the Hebrew authority. As a result he translated all the books of the Old Testament with scrupulous care from Hebrew into Latin and properly arranged them according to the sequence of the twenty-two letters that stand in the Hebrew alphabet, letters through which all wisdom is learned and the memory of what was said has been preserved forever in written form. There are in addition twenty-seven books of the New Testament. Taking both Testaments together the total is forty-nine. Add to this sum the omnipotent and indivisible Trinity (through which these deeds were done and on account of which these prophecies were uttered), and, indeed, you have the number fifty: like the jubilee year¹⁴⁸ the total cancels debts by the great goodness of its benefit and takes away the sins of those who are truly penitent.

¹⁴⁶ The arrangement of the books of the OT by St Jerome: *Prologus <galeatus>in libro Regum, BSV, 364–66.*

¹⁴⁷ There are several errors in the report of this chapter of the *Institutiones* on the arrangements of OT books by St Jerome. In addition to Samuel (= I and II Kings), Jerome counts the two further Books of Kings (III and IV Kings) as Malachim. Jerome includes Ecclesiastes, not Ecclesiasticus (the reading Ecclesiastes appears in Mynors' app. crit. and belongs to MS families Θ and Ξ) in his list, and also adds Daniel after the Song of Songs (W. Thiele, 227, No. 73). Lamentations he considered as part of Jeremiah. The books Wisdom, Ecclesiasticus (= Sirach), Judith, Tobit, Maccabees (as well as the Shepherd of Hermas) are placed by Jerome among the apocrypha and are not part of the canonical Scriptures. Cassiodorus omits Malachim and therefore divides Judges–Ruth, which are one book in Jerome, into two, and does not account for Lamentations. This still gives him only twenty-one items, since he omits Daniel. Whether these are errors of Cassiodorus or of the manuscript tradition is unclear, but lists are often confused in medieval manuscripts. The list of books according to St Jerome in the diagram in the Codex Amiatinus (fol. VI recto), which probably derives from an illustration in Cassiodorus' *codex grandior*, is in full agreement with Jerome's prologue. See *PL* Supplement 4.1389.

¹⁴⁸ See *Inst.* 1.4.4, n. 72 (above).

3. Because of the large amount of text I have decided that this full volume of the Latin Bible ought to be written in a rather small script in fifty-three gatherings of six folios each so that the close density of the writing might bring within a short compass the fullness of the text.

4. We ought to recall that Jerome arranged his translation of the entire divine authority (as he himself bears witness) for the simple brothers into *cola* and *commata*¹⁴⁹ so that those who have difficulty in understanding the punctuation of sacred letters might, thus assisted, pronounce the holy text without error.

XIII. The Division of Divine Scripture according to St Augustine

1. Divine Scripture according to blessed Augustine is divided into two Testaments, i.e. the Old and the New. The Old: History in 22 books, 5 books of Moses, Joshua 1, Judges 1, Ruth 1,

Kings 4, Paralipomenon 2, Job 1, Tobit 1, Esther 1, Judith 1, Esdras 2, Maccabees 2. Prophets in 22 books: Psalter of David 1, Solomon 3, Sirach 2, Major Prophets 4 (i.e., Isaiah, Jeremiah, Daniel, Ezekiel) and Minor 12 (i.e., Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Zechariah, Haggai, Malachi). The New: Gospels in 4 books (i.e., according to Matthew, Mark, Luke, John). In Epistles: of Paul: Romans 1, Corinthians 2, Galatians 1, Ephesians 1, Philippians 1, Thessalonians 2, Colossians 1, Timothy 2, Titus 1, Philemon 1, Hebrews 1. Peter 2, John 3, Jude 1, James 1. Acts of the Apostles 1, On the Apocalypse 1.¹⁵⁰

2. In *Christian Learning*¹⁵¹ St Augustine, therefore, arranged the Divine Scriptures into seventy-one books, using the arrangement of the above-

149 See *Inst.* 1.pr.9, n. 8 (above). Jerome nowhere states that he arranged the whole of Scripture *per cola et commata*. In the Preface to Isaiah (*BSV*, 1096), he states: *nos quoque utilitati legentium providentes interpretationem novam novo scribendi genere distinximus* ('I also looking to the aid of the readers punctuated the *new translation* with a new way of transcribing it'). 'New translation' perhaps refers only to his translation of the book of Isaiah or to that of the prophets in general, and not to the entire Bible. In the Preface to Ezekiel, Jerome writes (*BSV*, 1266): *Legite igitur et hunc iuxta translationem nostram quia, per cola scriptus et commata, manifestiorem sensum legentibus tribuit* ('Read, therefore, also Ezekiel according to my translation, because, since it is written *per cola et commata*, it offers a clearer meaning to the readers'). Cassiodorus obviously interpreted Jerome's words differently.

150 This same list appears, attributed to St Augustine, in the diagram in the Codex Amiatinus (fol. 8 recto).

151 *Doct. Chr.* [*CPL* 263] 2.8.13 (CCSL 32.39–40). English translation: *FOTC* 2 (1947), 70–71.

mentioned nine sections that the holy Church devised. And when you have added the unity of the holy Trinity to this number, there is a satisfactory and glorious completeness to the whole measure.

XIV. The Division of Divine Scripture according to the Septuagint

1. The Holy Scripture according to the ancient translation¹⁵² is divided into two Testaments, i.e. in the Old Testament: Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy, Joshua, Judges, Ruth, Kings (in 4 books), Chronicles (in 2 books), Psalter (in 5 books), Solomon (in 5 books: Proverbs, Wisdom, Ecclesiasticus, Ecclesiastes, Song of Songs). Prophets: Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, Hosea, Amos, Micah, Joel, Obadiah, Jonah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi (which is also the Messenger), Job, Tobit, Esther, Judith, Esdras (in 2 books), Maccabees (in 2 books). In the New Testament: 4 Gospels: Matthew, Mark, Luke, John. Acts of the Apostles. Epistles of Peter to the nations. Epistle of James. Epistles of John to the Parthians. Epistles of Paul: to the Romans 1, to the Corinthians 2, to the Galatians 1, to the Philippians 1, to the Colossians 1, to the Ephesians 1, to the Thessalonians 2, to Timothy 2, to Titus 2, to Philemon 1. Apocalypse of John.

2. This third division (according to the Septuagint) stands among the others in the larger volume written in a clearer script. It has ninety-five gatherings of four folios each in which the translation of the Old Testament by the seventy interpreters is included in forty-four books; to this are added the twenty-six books of the New Testament and the total comes out altogether as seventy books, symbolized perhaps by the number of the palm trees that the Hebrew people found at the resting place of Elim [Exodus 15:27].

3. This text is varied being translated by many people, as is stated in the prologue of the Psalter,¹⁵³ and Jerome left it carefully emended and arranged;

152 The *antiqua translatio*: Cassiodorus uses this term to refer to the Septuagint translation of the Bible into Greek. Since this was a translation of the Hebrew Bible, it cannot be the source of his division for the New Testament. Old Latin translations (referred to now under the collective title of *Vetus Latina*) of which there were many, were probably made of both Testaments, and one or more of these may be the source of Cassiodorus' division. For the Old Latin Bibles, see the work of Fischer, collected now in two volumes. For a brief overview of the Old Latin translations of the New Testament, see Metzger, 72–75 and Birdsall.

153 It is not clear to which prologue Cassiodorus is referring. Jerome does not deal with the question of many translations in his preface. He only mentions that he had at first corrected the Latin rendering he had at his disposal (clearly some Old Latin version) according to the LXX, but had done that improvement only 'quickly' (*cursim*), BSV 767. For versions of the Psalter prior

and I have judged that all three sets of divisions ought to be marked in this book, so that when they are carefully considered and treated they seem not to disagree but rather explain one another. As a result, although many Fathers – St Hilary, bishop of Poitiers, and Rufinus, a priest of Aquileia, and Epiphanius, bishop of Cyprus, and the Councils of Nicaea and Chalcedon¹⁵⁴ – have said things not contradictory to one another but only different, all have, nevertheless, by their divisions, fitted the sacred books to the appropriate mysteries, as also happens in the harmonies of the Gospels where we regard the events with faith although they differ in the way they are told.

4. But since Father Augustine in the second book of *Christian Learning*¹⁵⁵ gives the following advice, ‘the Latin copies, i.e., of the Old and the New Testament, if there is need, should be corrected by the authority of the Greek from which all translations have reached us after the Hebrew source’. So I have left you also a complete Greek Bible in seventy-five books that contains ____ [number] of gatherings of four folios each in the previously mentioned eighth bookcase¹⁵⁶ where I have systematically collected the various short works of other Greek writers. In this way nothing that is essential to your instruction in sacred matters will be missing. And this number is made holy by two miracles: for seventy-five souls entered the territory of the Egyptians from the land of Canaan with the patriarch Jacob [Genesis 46:27] and seventy-five were the years of Abraham when he

to Jerome’s translation, which is usually referred to as the ‘Gallican Psalter’ and is printed in *BSV*, see R. Weber.

154 Hilary: Cassiodorus confuses Hilary, bishop of Poitiers, with Pope Hilarus (AD 461–68), who appears, with Epiphanius of Cyprus, as the source of this arrangement in the diagram in the Codex Amiatinus (fol. VII recto). See also W. Thiele, 224, Nos. 6 9, and 13.

155 Augustine, *Doct. Chr.* [CPL 263] 2.15.22 (CCSL 32.48). English translation: FOTC 2 (1947), 81. Cassiodorus is clearly citing Augustine from memory; Augustine’s text reads: *Latini ... codices veteris testamenti, si necesse fuerit, graecorum auctoritate emendandi sunt et eorum potissimum, qui cum Septuaginta essent, ore uno interpretati esse perhibentur* (‘the Latin codices of the OT, if there will be need, are to be emended with the use of the authority of Greek books, and especially of those which, although they were Seventy, are said to have translated in one and the same way’). Note that Augustine does not speak of the Hebrew source, and correctly refers only to the OT.

156 The eighth bookcase and the Greek books: according to Courcelle, *Late Latin Writers*, 337f., although we know that the Greek manuscripts possessed by Cassiodorus occupied the eighth bookcase, we have no idea exactly what books were in it. The number of Greek books that Cassiodorus specifically mentions in the *Institutiones* and his *Psalm Commentary* as being in his collection are some fifteen items (Courcelle, *Late Latin Writers*, 337, fn. 38), but he could, of course, have had more. In any case, the discussion in the *Institutiones* makes it abundantly clear the monks of Vivarium could only have made use of such books as were translated into Latin.

happily received the promise of the Lord [Genesis 12:4].

5. Now it remains for me to say how we ought to correct scribal errors in Holy Scripture. What use is it to read through many texts and not to know what should properly be corrected in them?

XV. How Carefully the Text of Holy Scripture Ought to be Corrected

1. You, therefore, who have a good knowledge of divine and secular letters and the understanding to discover what is not in harmony with common usage, read through sacred literature in the following manner; for the few who are learned must prepare material for the simple and less educated community. Therefore, first read carefully and correct the errors of the scribes in such a way that you do not deserve criticism for trying to correct others without due deliberation; this kind of correction is, in my opinion, the most beautiful and glorious task of learned men.

2. First, do not impudently question the idioms of Divine Scripture lest you damage the purity of the heavenly works (God forbid!) when you try to bring the text into harmony with common understanding. By idioms of Divine Scripture are meant the peculiar turns of phrase that do not occur in common usage, such as:

- ‘according to the innocence of my hands’ [Psalms 17:21, 25; cf. 7.9]
- ‘let my judgment come from your eyes’ [Psalms 16:2]
- ‘with your ears perceive my tears’ [Psalms 38:13]
- ‘pour out your hearts before him’ [Psalms 61:9]
- ‘my soul clings fast after you’ [Psalms 62:9]
- ‘you have multiplied to enrich it’ [Psalms 64:10]
- ‘there we shall rejoice to that very thing’ [Psalms 65:6]
- ‘he pours from this into this’ [Psalms 74:9]
- ‘he sent Moses his servant; and Aaron whom he chose him’ [Psalms 104:26]
- ‘my eyes have failed towards your speech’ [Psalms 118:82]
- ‘let your hand be so that it may save me’ [Psalms 118:173].¹⁵⁷

¹⁵⁷ The modern translations of the Bible into English obscure the grammatical problems and odd usages that occurred when the Hebrew or Greek Bible was translated into Latin. Many of the examples that Cassiodorus cites are from the Psalms, of which several Old Latin versions continued in use, even after Jerome produced his full translations, because the texts had become traditional from their use in liturgy (see R. Weber, viii–xii). Some attempt is made to render them here in their odd form, but readers who want to know more about these matters are directed to Blaise, Sanders, Nunn and Plater.

These and similar expressions are numerous, although common usage avoids them. Nevertheless one must not efface them, as that authority that is certainly sacred approves them. But if you desire to understand these matters more fully, read St Augustine's seven books on the *Types of Speech*¹⁵⁸ that he wrote on the five books of Moses, on Joshua, and on Judges, and then you shall be fully satisfied on this subject. Then it will be easy for you to find plenty of similar cases in the Biblical books that follow.

3. Do not alter certain Hebrew names of individuals and places by declining them; let the pleasing simplicity of their language be preserved. We should change only those letters that can express the case of the word itself, since the interpretation of the name of each of these is tied to a great mystery of some sort, as Seth, Enoch, Lamech, Noah, Shem, Ham, Japheth, Aaron, David, and the like. Let us treat with the same respect the names of places such as Sion, Choreb, Goen, Hermon, and the like.

4. Thirdly, words that are used in a good and bad sense must not be tampered with at all, like mountain, lion, cedar, lion's cub, shout, man, fruit, cup, calf, shepherd, treasure, worm, dog, and the like. And those terms that are set down in place of other words also must not be changed.

For example:

A *Satan* who departs from the straight path –
to wash one's hands means not to take part in –
 that *feet* are set down for the act –
 that often *awaiting* is used for hope –
once expresses an unchangeable decision –
to swear by God is stated instead of to assert.¹⁵⁹

Let us hope that the commentators will explain these terms to us; let us not mangle any of them with impious intent.

5. Do not alter those words that from time to time appear to be set down contrary to the human art of grammar, but that are defended by the authority of many copies, since words evidently spoken under the inspiration of the Lord cannot be corrupt. For example:¹⁶⁰

¹⁵⁸ Augustine, *Locutiones in Heptateuchum lib vii* [CPL 269] (CCSL 33.379–465).

¹⁵⁹ The five examples from *to wash one's hands* to *to swear* are discussed in Greek by Hadrianus, *Eisagoge*, sections 70, 74, 76, 56, 79 (ed. Goessling, 94, 96, 98, 90, 98). Cassiodorus undoubtedly used a Latin translation (as well as for his *liber introductorius*), but I do not know of any extant ancient Latin version.

¹⁶⁰ Some of these linguistic oddities are remarked on by Augustine (see n. 158, above), and many are corrected in the Vulgate version of Jerome.

'we have not forgotten you' [Psalm 43:18] and the following phrase
 'men of bloods and deceitful' [Psalms 54:24]
 'he was made a temple' [Zechariah 8:9]
 'he will be shaved as to his head' [Numbers 6:9]
 'she will swell as to her belly' for 'she will be swollen in her belly' [Numbers 5:27]
 'of a man of a man if his wife shall have deceived' [Numbers 5:12]
 'on the altar they shall put his vessels in which they serve in them' [Numbers 4:14]
 'the country in which they live in it' [Numbers 13:19]
 'the scouts brought fear of the land that they had scouted it' [Numbers 13:33]
 'my only one from the hand of the dog' [Psalms 21:21]
 'the rivers shall clap their hands in themselves' [Psalms 97:8]
 'then shall all the timbers of the forests exult.' [Psalms 95:12]

6. And since sometimes the cases and genders of nouns and verbs cannot fit human rules, and yet by agreement the Church accepts their usage, let the authority of two or three old and corrected copies be sought – for it is written, 'every word shall be established on the utterance of two or three' [Deuteronomy 19:15 et al.] – and do not be bold on a matter supported by divine language as in Psalm 21, 'to a people yet to be born whom the Lord has made' [Psalms 21:32], and the following from the Gospel, 'going, teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit' [Matthew 28:19], and likewise in Psalm 143, 'happy the people whose Lord is the God of them' [Psalm 143:15], and the like.

7. Do not, therefore, completely follow the rules of Latin idioms, i.e. the *Quadriga* of Messius,¹⁶¹ provided you are convinced by the authority of ancient copies; for sometimes it is right to pass over the rules of human expression and instead keep the arrangement of divine speech. In prose do not correct what begins or ends like a line of epic; do not presume to disapprove of five long or as many short syllables; let a praiseworthy oversight hide a triple trochee.¹⁶² Disregard the misuse of final *-m* and the hiatus of

161 Arusianus Messius, *Exempla elocutionum ex Vergilio Sallustio Terentio Cicerone digesta per litteras* (GLK 7.449–514); ed. A. Della Casa, Milan: Marzorati, 1977). His book was popularly known as the *Quadriga* ('the four-horse chariot') because it took its examples from four model authors: Cicero, Sallust, Terence, Virgil.

162 There were strict rhythmic rules for the writing of classical Latin prose. Of particular importance was the cadence (*clausula*) at the end of the clause or of the sentence. Certain syllabic patterns were sought, others acceptable, and still others avoided. Especially avoided was any indication that the sentence or clause was verse. Thus, the avoidance of a sentence

vowels completely, since the rules that the teachers of grammar and style regularly observe do not have a place in these texts. In human composition it is proper to guard against this; in divine speech such juxtapositions are in no way to be criticized. Let an expression that has pleased God stand untouched so that it may shine in its own brightness and not be subject to capricious human criticism. For this kind of expression sweetly teaches even the simple and delights the learned in accordance with the extent of their reverence.

8. After the division above, therefore, I said that idioms (or other matters that logically follow) of divine law are not to be altered, at this point in the discussion it seems proper for me to lay out this subdivision, too, in the traditional manner so that we may see our way more clearly to the subsections. For how could Aristotle, that learned man, have been able to make clear his *On Interpretation*¹⁶³ if he had not treated everything maintaining a sequence of divisions and subdivisions and further subdivisions? Therefore, following his example, I now speak of the letters in which the scribes' errors are to be corrected.

9. With words that accompany a preposition taking the accusative and ablative, distinguish carefully between rest and motion since scribes who do not know the art of grammar are particularly prone to make mistakes here; for if you add or subtract the letter *-m* improperly, the style is completely disturbed. Observe carefully the cases of nouns (except for indeclinable ones) and the conjugation of verbs that are not defective, and all the parts of speech – where sacred authority does not oppose – keep items fitted in their proper locations, so that an ugly muddle does not take over completely (God forbid!) if the syntax is confused. Do not leave *-b* for *-v*, *-v* for *-b*, *-o* for *-u*, *-n* for *-m*, when these letters have been set down incorrectly contrary to the rules of proper spelling; take away a superfluous aspirate or when suitable add one. Carefully keep the cases of nouns and the tenses of verbs where you are allowed to; for you will often find forms in the authority that do not agree with common usage, and these you are not allowed to alter. In these follow the example of the emended copies, but correct others that are incorrect.

beginning or ending with dactyls, which might mislead the reader into thinking that the text was in epic (dactylic hexameter) verse. For brief discussions see Brogan and Halporn, 'Prosa-rhythmus'.

¹⁶³ Aristotle, *Perihermenias* (*De interpretatione*). English translation: J.L. Ackrill, Clarendon Press, 1978 (1963). For the Latin translation of Boethius, which Cassiodorus probably used, see *Aristoteles Latinus*.

Scribes in such cases cause damage when they do not know how to keep in a regular way to the usage of the Latin language. Do not leave *-a* at the end of an adverb; but do not take *-a* from the genitive case. We do well to change many forms also in respect of euphony because of the letters that follow, such as *illuminatio*, *irrisio*, *immutabilis*, *impius*, *improbis*. Take away superfluous *-r* from *narratio*; for the form of this word comes from *gnarus*, i.e. learned or skilled. Write *quod* when it is a pronoun, with *-d* and not *-t*; but when it is a numeral adverb, it must be written with *-t* not *-d*. *Quicquam* – *-c* ought to be placed in the first syllable rather than *-d* for the sake of euphony, which we are advised to follow. What more? Look over what is to be corrected according to the rules of writers on this art, to prevent the lovely harmony of the spoken word from becoming ugly and discordant by the addition of letters that do not belong.

10. Frequently reread the old writers on proper spelling. In chapter 30 below, in which scribes are discussed, I have indicated which works ought to be excerpted as useful for instructing the scribes. Moreover I have given the title *Proper Spelling* to this book separately.¹⁶⁴ Thus it is of value for the scholar to read this book also, to learn what he must not violate at all in Sacred Scripture and that book in which he can find a fuller discussion of hasty errors that should be universally corrected.

11. If, nevertheless, some words that make no sense have been set down, they must be courageously corrected either from those books that blessed Jerome corrected in his edition from the Septuagint or those that he translated himself from the Hebrew;¹⁶⁵ or, as blessed Augustine said, we should have recourse to the complete Greek Bible,¹⁶⁶ in which is brought together the whole divine law; or, for scholars to whom this is possible, let them not hesitate to consult Hebrew writings or teachers of Hebrew, for it is only right that satisfactory correction come also from the source of our redemptive translation. For rightly our fathers took great care that the tunic of the Lord the Saviour, which the fierce soldiers were not allowed to tear up [John 19:23–24], should not be left to the mercy of unskilled readers. Let the Holy Spirit hear in its most pure form what it has given, let it receive intact what it bestowed; then it knows that we are faithful to it as we do not pluck at its words with any preconceived opinion. For how do we expect to be saved if (unspeakable thought!) we, to gratify our own will, destroy the aid that brings salvation?

¹⁶⁴ Cassiodorus, *De orthographia* [CPL 907] (GLK 7.143–210).

¹⁶⁵ For Jerome as a translator of Scripture, see Sparkes, 517–26.

¹⁶⁶ Augustine, *Doct. Chr.* [CPL 263] 2.15.22 (CCSL 32.47–48). English translation: FOTC 2 (1947), 79–81.

12. But so that we may add ornament to all this, place in each chapter punctuation marks that the Greeks call *thesis*, i.e., small round points – except for the translation of St Jerome which he decided to mark by *cola* and *commata*¹⁶⁷ (we have already spoken about this in the preface) – since they make the written text clear and bright when, as is explained below, <like torches> they are fitted in their place and shine forth. How excellent it is to pass unhindered through holy thought and to enter subtly into the sound nature of its precepts; to set correctly one's own limits for a measured speech and to divide the whole composition in parts in such a way that we can see its beauty and symmetry! For if our body must be known through its limbs, why does it seem right to leave reading confused in its arrangement? These *positurae*, or points, indeed, like paths for mind and lights for the composition, make readers as teachable as if they were instructed by the clearest commentators. The first is the colon, the second, the comma, the third, the period; these were invented by our ancestors to enable the breath tired out from long speaking to regain its strength in the pauses. If you, as an eager reader, would like to know them, read Donatus,¹⁶⁸ who can accurately instruct you by his brief summary on this subject. I recall that I placed these punctuation marks in the archetype of the Psalter, and, in this way I have, with God's help, largely clarified its obscurities.

13. The number seven is so complete on both sides that it is, to my mind, obviously clear what changes we should refrain from and what corrections we should make with the aid of authority. But if, nevertheless, this desire to make corrections can also be aided in some other ways, let it be added to your pursuits so that we may not seem, in human fashion, to have ignored some indispensable matter.¹⁶⁹

167 See *Inst.* 1.pr.9, n. 8 (above).

168 Donatus, 'De posituris', *Ars grammatica* 1.5 (4.372 GLK). Donatus speaks of three punctuation marks, which he calls 'distinctio', 'subdistinctio', and 'media distinctio'. The 'distinctio' marks the end of the whole sentence: it is a high point set at the end of the sentence. The 'subdistinctio' marks a minor pause in mid-sentence: it is a low point. The 'media distinctio' marks a breath-pause: it is a point set at the mid-height of the letter. At the end of his discussion Donatus says, 'In reading, the whole sentence is called a period, whose parts are *cola* and *commata*.' Parkes, *Pause and Effect*, 13, interprets this passage of Donatus somewhat differently.

169 This section with its mention of the number seven suggests that Cassiodorus has given seven pieces of advice on the correction of Scripture. How these are distributed in sections 2–12 is not immediately apparent. Cassiodorus begins section 2 with the words *in primis* ('first') and section four with *tertio* ('thirdly'), but after that he ceases to make a count. Unless, using a method that would have been dear to the heart of Cassiodorus, we begin the count again at section 5 (omitting section 8, which is an introduction to what follows) and go on to section 12, we have seven further items.

14. Now I must discuss on what grounds we ought to emend other texts apart from authority. Let each corrector read the commentaries on divine law, the letters, the sermons, the works of our predecessors with the intention of making their corrections in accord with the teachers of secular letters. Wherever spelling errors are found in learned authors, he should fearlessly correct the errors, since the writers surely wrote their works so that they could be judged according to the rules of grammar that they had learned. Also, the letters of the Fathers, the sermons, and the books by various authors as well as homilies or disputes of the faithful with the heretics, since they reveal various passages of Divine Scripture sweetly and carefully, must be emended with great care so that the whole will shine forth brightly and brilliantly with the Lord's support in the Church of the Lord, as though lit by lamps. If their contents shed light on Divine Scripture do not hesitate to add them to the volumes of Divine Scripture just as I have done with the books of Kings. For scholars discover many fuller statements concerning these books by chance in commentaries on other books and these may be properly attached to the sacred authority. So I pray that you, through your greater reading both from those books that I have left and those that you will have the good fortune to find, will, in Christ's name, fill in the gaps in what we have been able to explain on the basis of our limited reading.

15. I pray also that those of you who undertake to emend, make the letters you add so beautiful that they appear to have been written by the scribes. For it is not proper to find anything foul in that beauty which afterwards may offend the eyes of scholars. Consider, therefore, the sort of case entrusted to you, the benefit of Christians, the treasury of the Church, the enlightenment of souls. See carefully to it, therefore, that no error is left in the truth, no falseness in the purity, and no scribal mistakes in the corrected text.

16. First, with the Lord's aid, I have listed the nine volumes of the law and detailed the introductory writers with their commentaries as carefully as I could. Next I touched on the three divisions of the whole divine law that our predecessors have given us. Then I included a section on the rules covering emendation of texts of divine authority to prevent disruption and transmission of troublesome confusion in the text to posterity because of excessive liberty with the text. Now I must discuss in all respects the excellence of divine reading so that each passage may be packed full with its own sweetness.

XVI. The Excellence of Divine Scripture

1. Note, excellent friends, how marvellously and how harmoniously the arrangement of words moves in Divine Scripture. There is an ever-increasing desire, a fullness without end, a glorious hunger of the blessed where excess is not reproved but constant desire is, instead, praised – and rightly so, since Scripture both teaches beneficial knowledge and offers eternal life to those who believe and act on their belief. They describe the past without fiction, and reveal more of the present than is seen, and tell of the future as if it had already taken place. Truth rules everywhere in them; everywhere divine excellence shines forth; everywhere benefits to the human race are revealed. While the present situation exists on earth, heavenly truth, in so far as we are able to grasp it, is revealed by parables and mysteries, as God himself bears witness in the seventy-seventh Psalm: ‘I will open my mouth in parables, I will utter mysteries from the beginning’ [Psalms 77:2]. For they pass on to us, in order that we may discharge all duties, a prayerful knowledge of the holy Trinity (which, over the great passage of time, humanity, blind, sad, and enslaved to idols, has not known). They tell us that the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, one God, creator and director of all created things does ‘all that he wills in heaven and on earth’ [Psalms 134:6]. If you seek its faithfulness, listen to the brief statement: ‘A stronghold for the oppressed in times of distress’ [Psalms 9:10]; if you seek power, hear: ‘Who can withstand your power?’ [Psalms 75:8; Wisdom 11:22]; if justice, read: ‘He will judge the world with justice’ [Psalms 9:99 and 95:13]. For Scripture declares most obviously that God is everywhere; in the words of the writer of the Psalms: ‘Where can I go from your spirit? from your presence where can I flee? If I go up to the heavens, you are there; if I sink to the nether world, you are present there’ [Psalms 138:7–8], and likewise the other aspects of God’s majesty are embedded in the holy writings.

2. Human reason indeed did not create these writings, but heavenly virtue imbued holy men with them; a clear understanding of these writings is then granted when in a spirit of dedication the mind believed that these works preached something true and beneficial. For what usefulness and sweetness will you not find in those writings, if you look with a clearly enlightened mind? There is a full discussion of virtues. No word falls idly [cf. III Kings 8:56], nor is there any delay in the fulfilment of the promise, giving eternal salvation to those who obey and inflicting eternal punishment on the proud. Hence we are advised not only to listen to the words, but to fulfil them in holy works. Sometimes Scripture speaks of the love of God and of our

neighbour; sometimes it instructs us to despise the perishable things of this world. It inspires you to recall that land where you will remain forever; it advises patience, gives hope, praises beneficial humility, always attacks a destructive pride and persuades us to perform frequent acts of reverent charity. With a benevolence beyond all compassion, the Judge himself bears witness that repentance is welcome, since the most generous Redeemer even grants the words by which he can be asked <to accept it>; he frightens that he may correct; he threatens judgment that he may spare; and he orders us to live in such a way that we deserve to be the companions of the holy angels and to possess that eternal sweetness, namely 'that God may be all in all' [I Corinthians 15:28]; then that 'we may see him as he is' [I John 3:2], and thus we may be filled with the abundance of his glory and not worn out by the emptiness of any further want. Who would not strive to obey such orders, except the man who is rushing in every way to eternal destruction? It is beyond all madness to neglect the commands of one's Redeemer and to fulfil the wish of our cruellest enemy. There are as many rewards as there are words; as many punishments as there are sentences. Useful teaching does not fail, unless the tongue fails to speak of mighty things. O, if the tongue would never cease from such teachings! Surely the opportunity for sin would disappear, if the restless minds of mortals had no idle time.

3. When these benefits have been gained by abundant kindness, we also receive knowledge, worthy of adoration and reverence, of the holy Trinity. This kind of life is completely unknown to the pagan who is dead because of his sins. It remains now to recall those who spoke reverently of the sacred Trinity in their books. To strengthen our faith, therefore, and to guard against the snares of the heretics, we should read blessed Hilary's profound and learned treatise on the holy Trinity in thirteen books.¹⁷⁰ You ought to read carefully and contemplate the lucid and charming books that St Ambrose composed and set down on this subject for the emperor Gratian;¹⁷¹ then St Augustine's wonderfully profound work, *The Trinity* in fifteen books.¹⁷² If anyone would rather consult a summary work concerning the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit and prefers not to be worn out by long reading, he should

170 Hilary of Poitiers, *De trinitate* [CPL 433] (CCSL 62, 62A). English translation: FOTC 25 (1954).

171 Ambrose, *De fide* [CPL 150] (CSEL 78). English translation: NPNF 2nd ser. 10 (1896), 201–314.

172 Augustine, *De trinitate* [CPL 329] (CCSL 50, 50A). English translation: FOTC 45 (1963).

read the book that Bishop Nicetas wrote *On the Faith*.¹⁷³ Filled thus with the illumination of heavenly doctrine, he will be led with concise brevity into contemplation of the divine. This book is joined to the books of St Ambrose that he sent to the emperor Gratian.¹⁷⁴ O inestimable kindness and excellence of the creator! 'The heavens are opened' [Matthew 3:16)], the holy Trinity shines revealed to the hearts of the faithful; paganism that acquired a status that did not belong to it was overturned by the true Lord and disappeared.

4. Useful also for the teaching of the ecclesiastical rule are the three honeyed books of St Ambrose *On Duties*,¹⁷⁵ as well as St Augustine's one book *The True Religion*¹⁷⁶ and the four books, *Christian Doctrine*,¹⁷⁷ his book *The Christian Struggle*¹⁷⁸ is also indispensable to those of you who have overcome the world and labour in the Christian fight. Likewise we ought also to read with great attention his offering a kind of moral philosophy, a collection from divine authority for the teaching and correction of moral behaviour called *The Mirror*.¹⁷⁹ We should also go through with tireless care the twenty-two books of St Augustine's *The City of God*¹⁸⁰ in which he shows both the confounding of Babylon, the city of the devil, and the brightness of Jerusalem, the city of Christ the Lord, in human life in their expected diversity. He also wrote to the priest Honoratus about five problems of the New Testament,¹⁸¹ and he worked out with remarkable intelligence eighty-three other problems.¹⁸² If anyone, however, wishes to correct his writings by careful examination and without erring through audacious presumption,

173 Nicetas, *Competentibus ad baptismum instructionis libelli vi* [CPL 647] (only partially surviving; Burn, 6–54). English translation: FOTC 7 (1949), 13–53.

174 See n. 171, above.

175 Ambrose, *De officiis ministrorum* [CPL 144] (Ed. G. Banterle, Milan: Biblioteca Ambrosiana, 1977). English translation: NPNF 2nd ser. 10 (1896), 1–89.

176 Augustine, *De vera religione* [CPL 264] (CCSL 32.187–260). English translation: J.H. Burleigh, *Of True Religion*, London–Philadelphia, 1953, 218–83.

177 Augustine, *De doctrina christiana* [CPL 263] (CCSL 32.1–167). English translation: FOTC 2 (1947).

178 Augustine, *De agone christiano* [CPL 296] (CSEL 41). English translation: FOTC 2 (1947), 315–53.

179 Augustine, *Speculum* [CPL 272] (CSEL 12.3–285).

180 Augustine, *De civitate Dei* [CPL 313] (CCSL 47–48). English translation: FOTC 8, 14, 24 (1950–54).

181 Augustine, *Quaestiones v de novo testamento ad Honoratum* (Ep. 140) [CPL 262] (CSEL 44.155–234). English translation: FOTC 20 (1953), 58–136.

182 Augustine, *De diversis quaestionibus lxxxiii* [CPL 289] (CCSL 44A). English translation: FOTC 70 (1982).

let him read through the two books of St Augustine's *Reconsiderations*¹⁸³ thoughtfully. From them the reader prepares himself by imitating St Augustine's method, and recognizes how great a supply of wisdom divine forgiveness bestowed on the most blessed Father, so that he whom no one perhaps could have reprov'd, corrects himself by a thorough reconsideration. It would take too long to mention all the works of this author. There is a fairly large volume containing an index to his works¹⁸⁴ that annotates his writings as briefly as possible, but still contains an extensive number of pages of reading.

XVII. Christian Historians

1. Christian studies, in addition to various commentators, also have their historians, who set about their task with the seriousness due to the Church and go through the changing events and the transformations of kingdoms combining <Livy's> purity of style with great discretion.¹⁸⁵ Since they tell the history of the Church and describe changes happening through different periods, they inevitably instruct the minds of the readers in heavenly matters. For these historians insist that nothing happens by chance or because of the weak powers of the gods as the pagan <historians> did; instead they truly strive to attach all events to the providential guidance of the Creator – as for example Josephus (almost a second Livy) who composed his books of *Jewish Antiquities* on a large scale.¹⁸⁶ Father Jerome writing to Lucinus Betticus says that he was not able to translate Josephus because of the size of this prolix work.¹⁸⁷ But I have had him translated into Latin in twenty-two books by my friends,¹⁸⁸ a task involving great labour on their part since he is subtle and complex. He also wrote seven other marvelously clear books on the *Jewish Captivity*.¹⁸⁹ Some ascribe the translation of this work to Jerome, others to Ambrose, still others to Rufinus.¹⁹⁰ The fact that this translation is ascribed to such men declares the special merits of its

183 Augustine, *Retractationes* [CPL 250] (CCSL 57). English translation: FOTC 60 (1968).

184 Possidius, *Operum S. Augustini elenchus* [CPL 359] (Wilmart, 'Operum', 149–233).

185 Dionisotti suggests that Cassiodorus' *lacteo nitore* may be making reference to Quintilian's description of Livy's *lactea ubertas* (*Inst. orat.* 10.1.32).

186 Josephus, *Antiquitates Iudaicae*. LCL Josephus 4–9 [Books 1–20] (1930–65).

187 Jerome, *Ep.* [CPL 620] 71.5 (CSEL 55.6). English translation: NPNF 2nd ser. 6 (1893), 153.

188 The *Antiquitates Iudaicae* together with the two books *Contra Apion*. LCL Josephus 1 (1926), 162.4–11.

189 Josephus, *Bellum Iudaicum*. LCL 2–3 Books 1–7 (1927–28).

190 *Hegisippus sive de bello Iudaico*. A fourth-century anonymous translation in five books of Josephus *Bellum Iudaicum* (CSEL 66).

composition. After these, one should read Eusebius' history in ten volumes; it is in Greek,¹⁹¹ but has been translated with additions of subsequent events by Rufinus, complete in eleven books.¹⁹² Socrates, Sozomen, and Theodoret wrote of the events in the Greek world in the period following the history of Eusebius;¹⁹³ with God's aid I have had these works translated by the learned Epiphanius in a collection of twelve books¹⁹⁴ so that eloquent Greece cannot boast that it possesses an indispensable work that has not been available to us. Also available to you is Orosius,¹⁹⁵ who compares Christian and pagan history, if you wish to read him. I have also left you the work of Marcellinus in four books¹⁹⁶ who discusses the nature of the times and includes a laudable and accurate account of the places he passed along the route of his journey.

2. Chronicles, which are sketches of history or very brief summaries of the past, were written in Greek by Eusebius;¹⁹⁷ Jerome translated this work into Latin and in excellent fashion brought it down to his own time.¹⁹⁸ Following Jerome, the aforementioned Marcellinus of Illyria extended Eusebius' work, with the Lord's aid, from the time of Emperor Theodosius up to the start of the glorious rule of the Emperor Justinian.¹⁹⁹ Marcellinus is said

191 Eusebius, *Historia Ecclesiastica* [CPG 3495] (GCS 9.1–3). English translation: LCL 2 vols (1926–32).

192 Eusebius–Rufinus, *Historia Ecclesiastica* [CPG 3495] (GCS 9). See Philip M. Amidon, trans., *The Church History of Rufinus of Aquileia, Books 10 and 11*, New York: Oxford University Press, 1997.

193 Socrates, *Ecclesiastical History* [CPG 6028] (PG 67.33–841; R. Hussey, *Socratis Scholastici Ecclesiastica Historia* I–III, Oxford, 1853). English translation: NPNF 2nd ser. 2 (1890), 1–178. Sozomen, *Ecclesiastical History* [CPG 6030] (GCS 50). English translation: NPNF 2nd ser. 2 (1890), 239–427. Theodoret, *Ecclesiastical History* [CPG 6222] (GCS 44). English translation: NPNF 2nd ser. 3 (1892), 33–159.

194 Epiphanius–Cassiodorus, *Historia Ecclesiastica Tripartita* (CSEL 71).

195 Orosius, *Historiarum adversum paganos* I. vii [CPL 571] (CSEL 5.1–600). English translation: FOTC 50 (1964).

196 *Marcellinus' *De temporum qualitatibus et positionibus locorum* is not extant.

197 Eusebius, *Chronicon* [CPG 3494] (GCS 47). Only fragments are extant.

198 Jerome *Chronicon* [CPG 3493] (GCS 47). Latin translation (in part) of Eusebius, *Chronicon* (see above, n. 197). Jerome tells us in his preface to this translation that the section from Ninus and Abraham to the capture of Troy was a translation of Eusebius' Greek. The section from Troy to the twentieth year of the Emperor Constantine (AD 326) was partly translated, partly included carefully excerpted material taken from Tranquillus (scil. Suetonius) and other major historians. Jerome wrote the section from the twentieth year of Constantine to the consulship of the Augusti Valens (sixth) and Valentinian (second) (AD 378).

199 Marcellinus Comes, *Chronicon* [CPL 2270–2271]. (MGH, AA 11, *Chronica minora* 2.60–108). English translation: Brian Croke, *The Chronicle of Marcellinus: A Translation and Commentary*, Sydney: Australian Assoc. for Byzantine Studies, 1995 [= Byzantina Australiensia, 7].

to have been the secretary of Justinian when he was still *patricius*, but was raised to a higher civil position; so having found favour in his services, he was clearly very devoted once Justinian became emperor. St Prosper also brought his chronicle from the time of Adam to the time of Geiseric and the sack of Rome.²⁰⁰ You may perhaps also find other later chroniclers, because there is no lack of historians to chronicle the epochs as the centuries pass on and succeed one another. But when you have been filled with events of the past, diligent reader, and your mind has been enlightened by divine radiance, read the book of St Jerome on *Famous Men*²⁰¹ in which he briefly does honour to the various Fathers and touches on their works; and then the second book by Gennadius of Marseilles²⁰² who reliably mentions writers on divine law whom he had sought out zealously. I have left you these writers gathered together in one collection so that looking for the same subject in different volumes does not cause additional delay.

3. The authors of many venerable texts follow. Now learned men either write books by divine inspiration or console each other by letters, or describe people in sweet language, or do battle with the heretics in energetic polemic. Some of them enter on controversies with special hostility and battle in glorious debate in the midst of their judges. Thus, the faithful are strengthened when all the wicked are destroyed with the Lord's aid. Then you may choose for yourself among that most holy and eloquent group of Fathers with whom you may most pleasurably commune. Furthermore, one can hardly count how often they find occasion to clarify Holy Scripture with the most relevant citations. Therefore in scanning you suddenly learn what you realize you had carelessly passed over. These learned men are outstanding witnesses in their varied excellence, and the Church shines with them as the heavens with twinkling stars.

XVIII. St Hilary

Among these is St Hilary, bishop of Poitiers, subtle because of his great depth, and a careful controversialist. With God's aid he reverently reveals the deep abysses of Divine Scripture to enlighten the mind and make distinct what was veiled in dark parables.

200 Prosper, *Epitoma Chronicorum* [CPL 2257] (MGH, AA 9, *Chronica Minora* 1.385–485).

201 Jerome, *De viris inlustribus* [CPL 616] (TU 14.1 a.1–56). English translation: NPNF 2nd ser. 3 (1892), 359–84.

202 Gennadius, *De viris inlustribus* [CPL 957] (TU 14.1.57–97). English translation: NPNF 2nd ser. 3 (1892), 385–402.

XIX. St Cyprian

It is entirely impossible to comprehend entirely the merit of blessed Cyprian in comparison to that of other writers (except for his views on the subject of repeated baptism²⁰³ that the practice and doctrine of the Church has rejected). As sweet as oil [cf. Psalms 132:2] in formal language, he is an outstanding speaker and a marvellous teacher. How many men in doubt has he kept from lapsing, how many backsliders has he supported and held by his firm preaching, and how many confessors has he brought all the way to martyrdom! In order not to be less than his preaching, he also received the crown of martyrdom with the Lord's aid. He left us, among other bright monuments of his eloquence, his commentary on the Lord's Prayer.²⁰⁴ He wrote this small book with a declamatory charm and it is like an invincible shield, always set against deceptive views that creep in unseen.

XX. St Ambrose

St Ambrose was also a writer of milky smoothness, intensely serious, sweet and calm in argument, whose teaching was equal to his life since the grace of divinity favoured him with no small miracles ...

XXI. St Jerome

1. Blessed Jerome also greatly enriched the Latin language. He has given to us in his translation of Divine Scripture so much that we hardly need to go to the Hebrew original since his great richness of eloquence is clearly enough for us. He blessed us with many books and with the ample letters he deigned to write with the Lord's aid. Clear, learned, sweet, and with a ready command of language, in whatever direction he turned his genius. Now he sweetly charms the humble, now he breaks the necks of the proud; now he gives his detractors their own again in a necessarily mordant style, now he preaches virginity, now he defends chaste marriages, now he praises the glorious battles of the virtues, now he reproves the lapses of priests and monks into wickedness. Nevertheless, wherever a passage allowed him, he added the sweetest variety of examples from pagan writers, explaining all,

203 On repeated baptism, see Cyprian, *Epp.* [CPL 50] 69–75 (CSEL 3.2.749–827). English translation: FOTC 51 (1964), 244–313.

204 Cyprian, *De dominica oratione* [CPL 43] (CCSL 3A.90–113). English translation: FOTC 36 (1958), 127–59.

adorning all, and always moving along learnedly and smoothly through the various types of discussions. For although some of his books are extensive and rich, we do not long for the end of his book because of the sweetness of his style. I do not believe that it was without meaning that he lived in Bethlehem; it must have been so that, in the land of miracles, his eloquence, like the sun, might shine on us from the East.

2. He wrote a marvellous letter to Paulinus,²⁰⁵ the senator who became a priest, explaining how he should carefully and thoroughly read Divine Scripture. In the letter he points out briefly and wonderfully the excellence of each book of the Old and New Testament. If I had found this earlier, I would perhaps have yielded to his eloquence and been content to say nothing on the same material; but since he wrote one thing and I another in the work now completed with the Lord's blessing, I think that the diligent reader will not be unprofitably occupied by this brief book, too, since he wrote for a reader who was inexperienced in the divine law, but so educated in secular literature, that he had even written a shrewd and eloquent book about the Emperor Theodosius.²⁰⁶ Moreover, at the time (as we are given to understand) he did not have so many writers on this material to recommend for systematic reading, since at that time the soldiers of Christ were still toiling in a healthful sweat in the gymnasium of the holy law, and he himself wrote many things in their company later. I had a different concern, first because I wrote to instruct simple and uneducated brothers so that they might be filled with holy writings by the study of many authors who have emerged in our time. Thus, they might laudably be instructed not so much by me who is a poor man in this matter as from the extensive writings of the ancient Fathers. In order to ensure that those who have not had a literary education do not lack anything, I think that they should be instructed in the arts and disciplines²⁰⁷ of secular letters briefly in the second book. Thus the knowledge of worldly letters may serve simple men, knowledge that clearly came out of Divine Scripture except for the additions of some learned men. I hope that I am not attacked and blamed for my novel boldness and may receive a bit of gratitude for my small service.

205 Jerome, *Ep.* [CPL 620] 53 (CSEL 54.442–465). English translation: NPNF 2nd ser. 6 (1893), 96–102.

206 *Paulinus of Nola on Theodosius (on his victory over the tyrants AD 394 [Gennadius, 49]; cf. Jerome, *Ep.* [CPL 620] 58.8 (CSEL 54.537–538); English translation: NPNF 2nd ser. 6 (1893), 122. This work of Paulinus is not extant.

207 For 'arts and disciplines' see *Inst.* 1.preface, n. 3, above.

XXII. St Augustine

Blessed Augustine, that excellent teacher, warrior against the heretics, defender of the faithful, and winner of the palm in widely known contests, is in some books obscure because he is so difficult; yet in others he is so clear that he is available even to children; his clear statements are sweet, but his obscure words are a rich feast of great usefulness. If anyone wants to know the liveliness of his intelligence, he should read the books of Augustine's *Confessions*²⁰⁸ in which he mentions that he had learned all the mathematical sciences without a teacher – a feat that others scarcely accomplish with the aid of learned teachers. He explains our creed too (the surety of our faith, the witness of an upright heart and the unfathomable guarantee of the promise) in many a commentary so that we, by understanding more deeply what we profess to believe may more carefully uphold our promises. We should also read the book in which he briefly summarizes the different heresies basing himself on the work of bishop Epiphanius,²⁰⁹ since no one of sane and intelligent mind would willingly crash on those rocks where he knows another suffered shipwreck. Indeed we ought to avoid in every way the views of those whom the prescient Church has condemned. Any rash statement of that sort should be vigorously rejected.

XXIII. The Abbot Eugippius and the Abbot Dionysius

1. It is also suitable for you to read the indispensable works of the priest Eugippius whom I myself saw – a man indeed not well educated in secular letters, but well read in Divine Scripture. For my relative Proba, a holy virgin, he excerpted from the works of St Augustine profound problems and opinions on a variety of topics that he collected, compiled, and organized into a collection of 338 chapters.²¹⁰ This book is recommended reading, since this diligent scholar set down in one collection what can scarcely be found in a great library.

2. Even today the orthodox church produces illustrious men outstanding in the splendour of their commendable teachings. For in our time there was the monk Dionysius who was Scythian by birth but thoroughly Roman in his

208 Augustine, *Confessions* [CPL 251] (CCSL 27). English translation: FOTC 21 (1953).

209 Augustine, *De haeresibus* [CPL 314] (CCSL 46.286–345). Based on the pseudo-Epiphanian *Anakephalaiosis* (*Recapitulatio*), an epitome of Epiphanius of Salamis *Panarion*. See Frede, 211.

210 Eugippius, *Excerpta ex operibus S. Augustini* [CPL 676] (CSEL 9.1).

manner of life. Learned in both languages, he embodied in his actions the justice that he had read of in the books of the Lord. He discussed Divine Scripture and understood it so thoroughly that when he was questioned on any point, he had a suitable answer immediately ready. He read dialectic with me. On the model of that glorious teaching he passed the many years of his life with the Lord's aid. I am ashamed to describe qualities in my friend that I cannot find in myself. There was great simplicity joined with wisdom, humility with learning, and brevity in his eloquence. He never set himself before even the lowest servant in any respect, though he was certainly worthy of conversations with kings. May he who was accustomed to pray with us and whose prayers in this world supported us intervene for us so that his merits may now aid us. At the request of Stephen, bishop of Split, he translated with brilliant eloquence the Greek texts of the ecclesiastical canons²¹¹ that matched his own manner of life, for he was a clear and good writer. Today the Roman Church makes continual use of them. You ought to read them eagerly so that you do not remain through your own fault ignorant of the salutary rules of the Church. He also translated from Greek many other works suitable for ecclesiastical use.²¹² He possessed such skill in Latin and Greek that he translated into Latin without any difficulty any Greek books he took up, and could translate Latin authors into excellent Greek so fluently and swiftly that you might think that the words he poured forth had already been written down.

3. It would take too long to narrate all the qualities of this man. Among his other excellences he had this one in particular, that although he had dedicated himself completely to God, he did not reject dealings with laymen; he was chaste although he saw the wives of others every day. He was gentle although he was battered by the mad whirl of angry men. Moved by remorse he poured forth his tears although he heard chattering voices of ordinary pleasure. He fasted without upbraiding those who ate. When invited he so gladly took part in company that in the midst of the corporeal feasts he always when questioned exhibited his spiritual riches. But if occasionally he did eat, he took little food and that the common fare. So I think that the highest type of patience is keeping the rule of abstinence in the midst of human delights. Thus I may enumerate the good qualities of his

211 Dionysius Exiguus (*PL* 67). Latin text of Canons and Council Acta: ACO 2.2.141ff.; 4.2.195ff. For the first edition of the *Codex canonum*, see Strewe.

212 For Dionysius Exiguus as translator of conciliar materials, see Siegmund, 62, 141, 145, 148, 155; Schanz–Hosius–Krüger, section 1240. For a list of his Latin translations, see Schwartz, ACO 4.2 (1914), xviif.

mind with sincere praise: he was strictly orthodox and completely and always attached to the regulations of old. Whatever question readers could raise concerning various authors, he was reputed to shine in knowledge of it. Evil men try in a libellous way to attribute the works of others to his melodious name to excuse their errors. But he, after leaving the perversity of the world with the Lord's aid and being received into the peace of the Church, I believe, has a place in the company of the servants of God.

4. I should perhaps still tell the rest about this holy man, which I know with the truth of total factual knowledge. But I must carry out my plan instead, which requires me to fulfil a promise and not dwell too long on something else with importunate loquacity. To prevent deceit from hurting you in the rules of faith, read what you have at hand – the Council of Ephesus and Chalcedon as well as the *Encyclia*, i.e. the letters of confirmation of the council.²¹³ If you read them carefully the clever tricks of wicked men will never prevail over you.

XXIV. General Summary. The Zeal with Which Holy Scripture Ought to be Read

1. And so after the introductory books,²¹⁴ let us read carefully through the scriptural text together with its commentators and let us with pious zeal follow the ways of understanding that have been given us by the labours of the Fathers; let us not look to non-existent problems with greedy excess. Let us believe that what is found reasonably stated in the best of expositors is surely divine. If anything happens to be out of harmony and discordant with the rules of the Fathers, let us consider it something to be avoided. The source of the worst kind of error is to approve of everything in authors who are suspect and to want to defend without judgment whatever you find there. For it is written, 'test all things; hold fast that which is good' [I Thessalonians 5:21].

2. But to summarize the essential points: everything that the ancient commentators have spoken of in a laudable way ought to be grasped eagerly. But those subjects that they did not deal with should be scanned first to avoid being worn out by fruitless toil, to discover their strongest points and to what knowledge they may lead us and finally what they intend us to draw out of them in our reading. For although the text may seem to be perfectly clear and

²¹³ Councils of Ephesus and Chalcedon; *Encyclia*: see above, n. 211, and Courcelle, *Late Latin Writers*, 331–34.

²¹⁴ Introductory books: see above, Chapter 10, n. 142.

splendid in a literal meaning, even so it also urges justice or reproves impiety, either preaches tolerance or attacks the vices of inconstancy, either condemns pride or exalts the virtues of humility, either checks those who are not at peace or consoles those who are most full of love, or tells something that urges us to good conduct and turns us away from evil thoughts by its respect for goodness. For if God promised rewards to the good only, his forgiveness would be ignored and fade; and if he always threatened destruction to those who are evil, despair of their salvation would drive them on to vice. Thus the Holy Redeemer for our salvation has ruled in such a way that he both frightens the sinners with the punishment he announces and promises worthy rewards to the good.

3. Therefore let the mind be ever intent on the general meanings of the books, and let us set our minds on that contemplation that does not merely sound in the ears but lights the interior eye. Although the narrative may seem to be simple, Divine Scripture contains nothing empty, nothing idle. It always speaks to some purpose that the righteous may profitably extract. When good actions are reported, let us be aroused immediately to imitation; when it tells of punishable deeds, let us fear to do them. Thus it happens that we always obtain something useful if we observe why these points are mentioned.

XXV. Geographers to be Read by Monks

1. I urge you also that it is useful to read through geographical writings so that you know the location of each place you read of in holy books. You will fully achieve this if you hasten to read carefully the small book of Julius Orator²¹⁵ that I have left you. He has included in four sections information on the seas, islands, important mountains, provinces, cities, rivers and peoples; almost nothing relevant to an understanding of geography is lacking in the book. Marcellinus of whom I have already spoken should also be read with equal care. He described in minute detail the cities of Constantinople and Jerusalem in four books.²¹⁶

2. Then learn from Dionysius' briefly sketched *Map*²¹⁷ where you may almost see with your own eyes what you heard of in the book mentioned

215 Julius Honorius, *Cosmographia*, *GLM* 21–55.

216 *Marcellinus Comes on Jerusalem and Constantinople, in four books, is not extant.

217 Dionysius Periegetes, *Pinax mundi: Descriptio orbis*, *GGM* 2.102–76. This popular work was often translated in antiquity: by Priscian, *GGM* 2.190–199 and by Avienus, *GGM* 2.177–89. Maps were included with it (see H. Gärtner, *Der kleine Pauly* 2 [1967], 74). See also Jacob, which includes three translations of this work.

above. Then if you are fired with interest for this noble subject, you have the book of Ptolemy²¹⁸ who described every place so clearly that you might almost think that he was an inhabitant of all regions. Thus, although you are in one place (as monks ought to be) you may traverse mentally what others in their travels have collected with a great deal of effort.

XXVI. Critical Marks to be Added to Texts

1. I have also taken care to have the texts marked, that my labour may instruct you and furnish your pursuit of sanctity with some little gift. With the Lord's aid I have (as far as an old man worn out by his long pilgrimage could) read over some of the books of the Fathers, and have written in at each point, accurately I think, abbreviations in red ink to create indexes for the volumes as follows: for comments on the Octateuch, OCT; on Kings, REG; on the Psalter, PSL; on Solomon, SAL; on Prophets, PROP; on the Hagiographa, AGI; on the Gospels, EV; on the Epistles of the Apostles, AP; on Acts and the Apocalypse, AAA. I have always written these at the beginning of the books that I have been able to go through according to my plan, so that you can clearly recognize them placed in the text if you look over each page studiously.

2. Then, if you like – those of you whose wide reading has made you bold – an easy imitation is available to you through the most trustworthy commentators. Thus it will come about that a different kind of commentary, incisive and beautiful, comes into being, and that matters our ancestors may have scarcely elucidated in their commentaries are found to be clarified there to some extent. The idioms of Scripture, i.e., turns of phrase peculiar to it, I also mark with the character PP wherever they are found. These phrases are not to be rashly altered.

XXVII. Figures and Disciplines²¹⁹

1. I offer the following advice: since both in the Bible and in the most learned commentaries we understand a great deal through figures of speech, through definitions, through grammar, rhetoric, dialectic, arithmetic, music,

218 Ptolemy, *Geographia*, ed. C.F.A. Nobbe cum introductione a Aubrey Diller, 3 vols in 1, Hildesheim: Olms, 1966. English translation: E.L. Stevenson, Claudius Ptolemy, *The Geography*, New York: Dover, 1991.

219 For 'disciplinae' = 'literary learning' see *Inst.* 1.preface, n. 3, above.

geometry, and astronomy, it is not irrelevant to touch briefly on the teachings of the secular teachers, i.e., the arts and disciplines and their divisions in a second book. In a brief compendium those who have already studied these subjects will find concise reminders and those who perhaps have not been able to read more widely may learn something of these subjects in this form. Knowledge of such matters is certainly useful and (as our Fathers believed) should not be rejected since you find these subjects treated everywhere in sacred letters, the origin, as it were, of universal and complete wisdom. For when these subjects have been set down and presented to us they aid us in every way to understand.

2. Let my subject, therefore, be the effort of writers of previous generations – what they have set forth broadly in many books let me present briefly in the collection contained in the second book mentioned above. Let me in laudable devotion call back to the service of truth the achievements they attained from the exercise of their cleverness. In this way what was pilfered secretly from Scripture may be turned honestly to the service of correct understanding. It is a central and demanding task, I think, to try to include in two books the full sources of divine and human letters; on this point those famous verses of Sedulius might be cited:

I demand great prizes, but you know how to give great prizes, and the one who offends you more is the one whose hope falters. [Sedulius *Carmen paschale* 1.349-350]

XXVIII. Reading for Those Who Cannot Attempt Advanced Study

1. But if some simple brothers cannot learn what has been anthologized in the following book because almost all brevity is obscure, let it suffice for them to consider the basic divisions of these matters, their uses and their excellences, so that they may be drawn to the knowledge of divine law by strong motivation. They will find in the various holy Fathers the source from which they can fulfil their desires with the greatest richness, provided they have a sincere desire for reading and a firm commitment to understand. Then a blessed perseverance may make scholars of those at first frightened off by profound study.

2. Still, let us learn that knowledge is not found in letters alone, but that God gives complete wisdom ‘to everyone according as he will’ [I Corinthians 12:11]. For if the knowledge of good things were only in letters, those who do not know letters obviously would not have righteous wisdom. But since many illiterate men come to true knowledge and perceive the right

faith by heavenly inspiration, God surely gives pure and devout minds what he judges to be useful to them. For it is written: ‘Happy the man whom You instruct, O Lord, whom by your law You teach’ [Psalms 93:12]. We should, therefore, seek in good actions and continual prayer to reach, in the companionship of the Lord, true faith and holy works in which our life is eternal. For it is written: ‘Unless the Lord build the house, they labour in vain who build it’ [Psalms 126:1].

3. On the other hand, the holy Fathers have not decreed that the study of secular letters should be rejected either, since to a considerable degree it is by this that our minds are equipped to understand Sacred Scripture. But if, with the support of divine grace, we seek knowledge of these matters seriously and reasonably, not in order to find in secular letters hope of advancement, but so that passing through them we should be eager to deserve useful and redemptive wisdom from the ‘Father of Lights’ [James 1:17]. For how many great philosophers choosing only this knowledge were unable to reach the source of wisdom and without the true light have been submerged in the blindness of ignorance. As someone has said, whatever is not sought for in its own way cannot be completely tracked down.

4. Many of our Fathers, schooled in secular learning and abiding in the law of the Lord, reached true wisdom, as blessed Augustine recalls in his book *Christian Learning* with the words ‘haven’t we seen Cyprian that sweet teacher and holy martyr come out of Egypt heavily laden with gold and silver and clothing, and with similar burdens Lactantius, Victorinus, Optatus, and Hilary?’²²⁰ I add Ambrose, Augustine himself, Jerome and many others ‘of the innumerable Greeks’. And ‘the very faithful servant of God, Moses himself, also did this of whom it is written that he was “learned in all the wisdoms of the Egyptians”’ [Acts 7:22]. Let us imitate these men and let us carefully but without hesitation, hasten to read both kinds of teaching if we can – for who would dare to hesitate with the example of so many such men before us? – with the full knowledge, as has often been said already, that the Lord can give good and true wisdom. As the Book of Wisdom says: ‘Wisdom comes from the Lord and with Him it remains forever’ [Ecclesiasticus 1:1].

5. Therefore with all effort, with all toil, and with every desire, let us seek to deserve the attainment of such a great gift with the Lord’s blessing. For this is a salutary, profitable, glorious, and eternal attainment for us from

²²⁰ Augustine, *De Doctrina Christiana* [CPL 263] 2.40.61 (CCSL 32.74). English translation: FOTC 4 (1947), 113–14.

which death, inconstancy, and forgetfulness cannot separate us but will make us rejoice in that sweet land, our home, with the Lord in eternal exultation. But if in some of the brothers, as Virgil reminds us, ‘cold blood stands like a barrier around their hearts’ [Virgil, *Georgics* 2.484] so that they cannot be completely educated in either human or divine letters, let them be supported by a certain elementary kind of knowledge and choose clearly what follows: ‘Let the countryside and running streams please me in the vales’ [Virgil, *Georgics* 2.485]. It is quite appropriate for monks to cultivate gardens, to plough fields, and to rejoice in the harvest of fruits. For it says in Psalm 127: ‘You will eat hard-earned bread, you are blessed and it will be well for you’ [Psalms 127:2].

6. If you are looking for authors on this subject, Gargilius Martialis has written most beautifully on gardens and also carefully described fertilizers for vegetables and their properties.²²¹ By reading from his commentary, everyone with the Lord’s aid can be fed and kept healthy. I have left this book to you among others. Columella and Aemilianus among others are equally praiseworthy writers on the cultivation of fields, the raising of bees, doves, and fish. But Columella, an eloquent and charming writer, discusses various types of agriculture in sixteen books, more suitable for the learned than for the untaught;²²² scholars of this work are treated not only to ordinary produce, but also to a most satisfying banquet. Aemilianus, an eloquent commentator, has discussed gardens and flocks and other matters in twelve clear and explanatory books.²²³ I have left these with the Lord’s aid among others to you to be read.

7. When these things are prepared for pilgrims and for the sick they become heavenly although they appear to be earthly. What a wonderful thing it is to refresh the weary either with sweet fruit or nourish them with baby dove eggs or to feed them with fish or soothe them with sweet honey. Since the Lord commanded us to give ‘even cold water in His name’ [Matthew 10:42; Mark 9:40] to the poor man, how much more pleasing will it be to give the sweetest food to all the needy in return for which you can receive on

221 Q. Gargilius Martialis: S. Condorelli, ed. [*Opera*] *quae extant I. Fragmenta ad holera arboresque pomiferas pertinentia*, Rome: Bretschneider, 1978–; V. Rose, ed. *Gargilii Martialis medicina ex oleribus et pomis, apud Plinii Secundi quae fertur...medicina*, Leipzig: Teubner, 1875, 129ff.

222 Columella, *De re rustica*. LCL, 3 vols (1951–55).

223 Palladius Rutilius Taurus Aemilianus, *Opus agriculturae*, ed. R.H. Rodgers, Leipzig: Teubner, 1975, 1–240. English translation: Thomas Owen, *The Fourteen Books of P.R.T.A. On Agriculture*, London: White, 1807.

the day of judgment the resultant reward multiplied. One must not neglect whatever activities can profitably aid man.

XXVIII. The Location of the Monastery of Vivarium or Castellum

1. In fact, the location of the monastery of Vivarium encourages you to prepare many things for pilgrims and the needy, since you have irrigated gardens and the fish-filled stream of Pellena that flows nearby. The stream is neither dangerous from big waves nor negligible because of slight flow. Directed skilfully it flows wherever you consider it necessary and provides enough water for your gardens and mills. It is available when needed and when it has satisfied your needs it recedes to a distance; when turned to a specific purpose, its sudden appearance does not frighten nor does it fail to appear when it is required. The sea also lies before you for various kinds of fishing and the captured fish can be closed up in fish ponds when you wish. For with God's aid I have constructed pleasant pools here in which many fish meander safely in pens. It is so like a mountain cave that the fish does not feel at all captive since it has freedom both to get its food and to hide in hollows as usual. I have also had baths constructed to benefit the afflictions of the body. Clear streams, known to be pleasant for drinking and washing, flow nicely into the baths. So, far from you having any reason to long for other places, your monastery is sought by outsiders. But these things, as you well know, are the pleasures of this present world, not the future hope of the faithful; for the former will pass, the latter will remain without end. Although we are settled here we should transfer our desires to those things that will enable us to reign with Christ.

2. Read devotedly and gladly what Cassian the priest wrote about the instruction of faithful monks.²²⁴ He says at the beginning of his holy treatise that there are eight cardinal vices to be avoided. He comprehends the dangerous movements of minds so well that he almost makes a man see and avoid the excesses that his dark confusion had hidden from him. Cassian has been justly criticized by blessed Prosper on the question of free will.²²⁵ On this account I warn you to read him with some care because he has gone beyond the mark in such matters. Victor of Maktar, an African bishop, with the Lord's aid has corrected his writings and has added what was missing so

²²⁴ Cassian, *De institutis coenobiorum* [CPL 513] (CSEL 17.3–231).

²²⁵ Prosper, *Epistula ad Rufinum de gratia et libero arbitrio* [CPL 516] (PL 51.77–90).

well that he deserves full credit in these matters.²²⁶ And I think this work, among others, should be sent to us soon from the region of Africa. Cassian does violently attack other sects of monks, but you, dear brothers, with God's aid, should choose that role that Cassian has praised, and rightly so.

3. But if, as I trust, the monastic way of life in the monastery of Vivarium properly trains you with the aid of divine grace, and if your purified minds happen to desire something higher, you have the pleasant retreat of Mount Castellum where you can live happily like anchorites with the Lord's aid. The place there is as secluded as a desert since it is entirely enclosed by ancient walls. It will be proper for those of you who have already been trained and tested to choose this dwelling place if you have prepared the ascent in your heart first. It is by reading that you know which of the two states you can desire or endure. It is a great thing that one who cannot teach others by his words may instruct them by the sanctity of his ways, pre-serving rectitude in his way of life.

XXX. Scribes and Advice on Proper Spelling

1. Still, I have to admit that of all the tasks that can be achieved among you by physical labour, what pleases me most (not perhaps unjustifiably) is the work of the scribes if they write correctly. By repeated reading through Scripture they instruct their minds and by writing they spread the beneficial teachings of the Lord far and wide. A blessed purpose, a praiseworthy zeal, to preach to men with the hand, to set tongues free with one's fingers and in silence to give mankind salvation and to fight with pen and ink against the unlawful snares of the devil. For Satan receives as many wounds as the scribe writes words of the Lord.²²⁷ Thus, while he remains in one place, he travels through different regions by the dissemination of his work; his work is read in holy places; the people hear how they may turn from evil purposes and serve the Lord purely; parting from his work, the work goes on. I can state that he can grasp the recompense from so many good works, provided he does them not at the urging of greed but in a virtuous pursuit. A man multiplies the heavenly words and, if such an allegory is permitted, by three fingers is written what the excellence of the holy Trinity speaks. O sight most glorious to those who consider it well! With running pen the heavenly words are written so that the reed with which the devil struck at the Lord's

²²⁶ *Victor, bishop of Maktar: his revision of Cassian is not extant.

²²⁷ See Cato, *ORF* 20: *Antiochus epistulis bellum gerit, calamo et atramento militat*.

head during the passion turns into an instrument to destroy his guile. It also adds to their glory that they seem to imitate the action of the Lord who wrote his law (though this is only stated figuratively) by the movement of his omnipotent finger [Exodus 31:18 etc.]. Many things indeed can be said of this outstanding art, but it is enough to say that they are called scribes who serve the balance and justice of the Lord.²²⁸

2. But to avoid mixing this great good with faulty words by altering letters or in case an uneducated corrector does not know how to correct errors, the scribes should read the ancient orthographers, i.e. Velius Longus, Curtius Valerianus, Papirianus, and Adamantius Martyrius on V and B, also on the initial, medial, and final syllables, and also on the letter B set in three places in a noun or adjective, and Eutyches on aspiration, also Focas on distinctions in gender.²²⁹ I have collected as many of these writers as I could with assiduous care. To avoid leaving ambiguity in any of the above-mentioned works that would create confusion because of the bewildering mixture of ancient inflections found in the books, I have gone to great pains to see that the excerpted rules come down to you in a separate compilation called *Proper Spelling*.²³⁰ In this way doubts can be resolved and the mind is more free to find a way of correcting the text. I have also heard that Diomedes and Theoctistus have written something on this art of spelling;²³¹ if the works are found you also ought to excerpt and collect them. Perhaps you will also find others by whom your knowledge may be improved. But those I mentioned will reward your close reading by removing all your dark ignorance and you will become familiar with matters that up to now you have known nothing of.

228 Cassiodorus sets out an incorrect etymology, deriving *librarius* ('scribe,' with short i) from *libra* ('balance,' with long i). For other ancient etymologies, see Maltby, 339 (s.v. 'libra (1)' and 'librarius'), 337 (s.v. 'liber (2)'). For the correct etymologies, see Ernout-Meillet.

229 Velius Longus, *De orthographia* (7.46–81 GLK); excerpt in Cassiodorus, *Orth.* (7.154–155 GLK). Dihle, *RE* 2A.15 (1955) 632–634. Curtius Valerianus: excerpt in Cassiodorus, *Orth.* (7.155–58 GLK). Kaster, no. 271. Papirianus: excerpts in Cassiodorus, *Orth.* (7.158–66 GLK). Kaster, no. 244. Adamantius Martyrius: *De B muta et V vocali* (7.165–99 GLK); *De nomine ac de prima nominis syllaba* (7.167–78 GLK); *De mediis syllabis* (7.178–85 GLK); *De ultimis syllabis* (7.185–93 GLK). Excerpts in Cassiodorus, *Orth.* (7.167–199). Kaster, no. 95. Eutyches, *De aspiratione*: excerpt in Cassiodorus, *Orth.* (7.199–202 GLK). Kaster, no. 57. Phocas, *De genere et declinatione nominis* (5.412–430 GLK); *Ars de nomine et verbo*, ed. F. Casaceli, Naples: Libreria scientifica editrice, 1974. Kaster, no. 121.

230 Cassiodorus, *Orth.* (7.143–210 GLK).

231 Diomedes, *Ars grammatica* (1.300–529 GLK). Kaster, no. 47. Theoctistus: see Wessner, *RE* 2A 10.1704–5 and Priscian, *Institutio artis grammaticae* (2.238.5 GLK; 3.231.24 GLK). See also Schanz–Hosius–Krüger, 4.2, section 1110. Kaster, no. 149.

3. I have also brought in men who are skilled in bookbinding with the object of covering the loveliness of sacred letters with external beauty. In this we imitate to some extent that example of the parable of the lord who dressed in wedding garments those whom he thought he should invite to dinner in the glory of the heavenly banquet [Matthew 22:11]. I have displayed, nicely I hope, many types and patterns of bindings for books in one volume so that the interested reader himself can choose the form of cover he prefers.²³²

4. I have also had self-fuelling mechanical lights made for study at night that maintain their bright flames. They fully maintain a copious abundance of bright rich light without human attention. In them the rich oil does not fail, although they burn continuously with a bright flame.

5. I have not allowed you to be ignorant in any way of the measurement of time that was invented for the great use of the human race. I have, therefore, provided a clock for you that the light of the sun marks, and another, a water clock that continually indicates the number of the hours by day and night, because obviously the brightness of the sun is often missing, but the water traces marvellously on earth the course that the fiery power of the sun runs on its path above. Thus, things that are opposed in nature, men's art has made to run together; in these devices the trustworthiness of events stands with such truth that their harmonious function seems to be arranged by messengers. These things have been furnished so that the soldiers of Christ, reminded by certain signs, may be called to carry on the divine work as though by the sound of trumpets.

XXXI. Medical Writers

1. But I address you, too, distinguished brothers, who vigilantly attend to the health of the human body. You carry out the duties of blessed compassion for those who seek refuge at holy places. You are sad at the suffering of others, sorrowful for those in danger, grieved at the pain of those who are taken in, and are always distressed at the misfortunes of others afflicted with their own sorrow. As you serve the sick with genuine devotion in accordance with the teachings of your art, you will receive your reward from him who can repay temporal deeds with eternal rewards. Learn, therefore, the properties of herbs and study the mixtures of drugs carefully; but do not put your hope in medicines and do not seek health in human counsels. For although the

²³² Cf. Nordenfalk. But this page is regarded by Bierbrauer (72–73) as dating from the Carolingian period because of the interlace decoration.

Lord is said to have invented medicine, it is he himself who certainly grants life, cures the sick [Ecclesiasticus 38:1ff.]. For it is written: ‘Whatever you do in word or in work, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him’ [Colossians 3:17].

2. Even if you do not have knowledge of eloquent Greek literature, you have first the *Herbal* of Dioscorides²³³ who discusses and sketches accurately the herbs of the fields. After this read Hippocrates and Galen translated into Latin, i.e. the *Therapeutics* of Galen addressed to the philosopher Glaucion and a certain anonymous work that has been collected from various authors;²³⁴ then Caelius Aurelius *Medicine*²³⁵ and Hippocrates *Herbs and Cures*²³⁶ and various other works written on the art of medicine that, with the Lord’s aid, I have left to you in the recesses of our library.²³⁷

XXXII. Advice to the Abbot and Congregation of Monks

1. Therefore, all who are enclosed within the monastery walls, keep the rules of the Fathers and the commandments of your own director. Gladly carry out what you have been ordered to do for your own good, because there is a valuable reward for obeying redemptive rules without complaint. I urge you, Abbots Chalcedonius and Gerontius, most holy men, to arrange everything in such a way that you can bring the flock entrusted to you, with God’s aid, to the gift of blessedness. Above all, receive the stranger, give alms, dress the naked, break ‘bread for the hungry’ [Isaiah 58:7], since that man will be truly comforted who comforts the wretched.

2. Educate also the peasants who belong to your monastery in good moral behaviour; do not weigh them down with the burden of increased exactions. For it is written: ‘For my yoke is easy, and my burden light’ [Matthew 11:30]. Let them not know of stealing and let them particularly

233 Dioscorides, *Herbal*: for translations of Dioscorides, see Schanz–Hosius–Krüger, section 1135. The translation, which dates to the sixth century and is illustrated, is judged by Courcelle, *Late Latin Writers*, 403–404) to be the one mentioned by Cassiodorus.

234 For the text history of the Latin translations of Galen, *Therapeutics*, the anonymous work on medicine, and Hippocrates, see ‘Vivarium and Greek Physicians’ (Courcelle, *Late Latin Writers*, 403–09).

235 Caelius Aurelianus, *Medicine*: J.C. Amman, ed., Caelius Aurelianus *De morbis acutis et chronicis libri VIII*, Amsterdam, 1755. English translation: I.E. Drabkin, ed. and trans., Caelius Aurelianus *On acute diseases and On chronic diseases*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1950.

236 Hippocrates, *Herbs and Cures*: see n. 234, above.

237 For the collection of works on medicine at Vivarium, see Courcelle, *Late Latin Writers*, 403–09.

not know of the worship of groves – a practice that is known to be familiar to peasants. Let them live in innocent community with happy simplicity. Let there be a second rank ordained for them in the monastic life. Have them come often to the holy monasteries so that they may be ashamed to be called yours and not to be known as part of your institution. Let them also know that God mercifully gives fertility to their fields if they are accustomed to call upon him faithfully.

3. You have received a kind of city of your own, pious citizens, in which, if you pass your life harmoniously and religiously with the Lord's aid, you will rejoice in this prefiguration of the heavenly land. Do not love sloth, which you know is hateful to the Lord. The instructive materials of Holy Scripture together with its commentators are available to you, commentators who are indeed flowery fields, the sweet fruits of the heavenly paradise, from which faithful souls are instructed to their salvation and your tongues are trained not in arid, but in fertile eloquence. Therefore read eagerly of the mysteries of the Lord so that you can show the way to those who follow. It is a shameful burden to have something to read and not to know what to teach.

4. Therefore, with a thought towards future blessedness, always read the lives of the Fathers, the confessions of the faithful, the passions of the martyrs, that, among other things, you will certainly find in the letter sent by St Jerome to Chromatius and Heliodorus.²³⁸ These readings have been famous throughout the whole world and, as a result, a holy desire for imitation will stir you and lead you to the kingdom of heaven. You know that crowns are given not only for the struggles of blood and for the virginity of the flesh. All who with God's aid overcome the sins of their bodies and believe rightly, receive the palm of sacred reward. But, as it is said, that you may more easily, with God's aid, overcome the death-dealing delights and evil enticements of the world and be pilgrims in this world [cf. Hebrews 11:13], as is said of the blessed, hasten to that redemptive cure of the first Psalm so that you 'may meditate on the law of God day and night' [Psalms 1:2]. Then the shameless enemy will not find a place since Christ occupies the entire mind. St Jerome has also expressed it well, saying: 'Love the knowledge of Scripture and you will not love the sins of the flesh.'²³⁹

5. Tell me, prudent men, what greater blessing is there than to have the favour of him whose wrath we cannot escape? For if the voice of the herald

238 *Jerome's *Ep. ad Chromatium et Heliodorum* is not extant.

239 Jerome, *Ep.* [CPL 620] 125.11.2 (CSEL 56.130). English translation: NPNF 2nd ser. 6 (1893), 248.

announces the prefect, if we know that his wagon is passing by the groaning of its wheels, do we not throw off all the delights of the heart when we fear his presence and his respect? God thunders through the vault of heaven, he shows his lightning in the clouds and often he shakes the foundations of the earth [cf. Psalms 17:13ff.] and (alas) his presence is not feared although he is everywhere entire and omnipotent. Therefore let us not believe that the judge is absent, and that we shall not come as defendants to his judgment seat. Let him who sins less give thanks that he has not been deserted by God's mercy and thus fallen headlong into sin; let the man who has committed many sins pray without ceasing. Let no one turn to lying excuses and tricky wishes. Let us confess that we are defendants who have sinned in every respect. Nothing is more foolish than to want to lie to him who cannot be fooled. For mercy is there ready when it is sought with a pure spirit. No case is worse in the sight of a compassionate judge than when the defendant neglects his own salvation.

6. Let us pray, therefore, dearest brothers, that he who has given such blessings to the human race that he deigned to carry the lost sheep on his shoulders and broke the chains of sin by taking on flesh,²⁴⁰ disclose the mysteries of the faith to those who are ignorant and estranged from them, give baptism, grant martyrdom, persuade the offering of alms and cleanse us by the holy teaching of the prayer that tells us to forgive the sins of our brother so that he also may likewise remit our debts [Matthew 6:12];

that we may convert the wanderer so that the bonds of our error be loosened;
that we may seek penitence with the greatest zeal;
that we have abundant love towards God and our neighbour.

7. Besides these things the most merciful Redeemer has given us the communion of his body and his blood so that in this way the generosity of the Creator can best be understood. For by his great kindness he grants us absolution if we seek him with a pure heart. May he now add also increase to his gifts; let him enlighten our minds, let him purify our hearts so that we deserve to learn his Holy Scripture with a pure mind, and with his grace aiding us carry out his commands.

240 Cf. *Regula Benedicti* [CPL 1852] 27 (CSEL 75.83).

XXXIII. Prayer

1. Give, Lord, advancement to those who read, remission of all sins to those who seek to learn your law, so that we who greatly desire to come to the light of your Scriptures may not be blinded by darkening sin. By this power of your omnipotence draw us to you; do not leave ‘those whom you have redeemed with your precious blood’ (*Te Deum* 20) to wander at their own free will; do not allow your image in us to be obscured. If it is protected by your aid it always stands out. Let not your gifts be overturned by the devil or by us, because everything is weak that strives to oppose you. Hear us, merciful King, against our sins and first take them from us before you can condemn us rightly for them in your deliberation.

2. Why does our evil lay a trap for us? Why do our sins fight against us? Why do sins desire to overturn your creation even though they have no firm substance? Let the devil tell for certain why he pursues us with insatiable envy. It surely was not we who advised him that he should be proud before you, the Lord, and fall from the blessedness that he had received, when through you he possessed the marks of such great excellence. Let it be enough that he struck us down in Adam. Why does the wicked false accuser attack us with daily deceits? Why does he also seek to separate us from grace as he through his own fault fell from your grace?

3. Grant us, O Lord, the beneficial aid of your defence against this most cruel enemy so that although he does not cease to attack our weakness, he will as often depart confounded by your power. Do not allow, good King, the most savage enemy to fulfil his desires on us. Why does he, who chose to offend you seriously, ‘as a roaring lion go about’ us [I Peter 5:8]? What does he hasten to devour? Once and for all we renounced him in sacred baptism, once and for all we confessed that we believed in you, O Lord. Grant us, good creator, protection to enable us to remain with your defence as pure as you conceded at the time of baptism. Let those of us who have begun to be yours not recognize another master. Let us who have been redeemed by your grace, carry out the commandments you have given us. If you leave us, the slippery fiend attacks us. Tireless and shameless he is always present counting human destruction as his gain. He flatters to deceive; he stirs up to destroy.²⁴¹ He deceives our soul in particular through our body and slipping in thus he spreads throughout human desires so that he is not perceived by foresight or plan. It takes a long time to mention everything. Who can oppose

241 Cf. Cyprian, *Ep.* 43.6 [*CPL* 50] (CCSL 3B.208). English translation: FOTC 51 (1964), 111.

such a one unless you, O Lord, decide to oppose him? What could he do with us if he dared to tempt you with crafty designs when you were in our body? Hear us, O guardian of men. Here by your indulgence free us from him who wants to drag us to Gehenna. Let us not cast our lot with him that we may cast our lot with you, O Lord. Protect your creation from him who destroys it. Let him who has condemned himself not bring about the damnation of others but let him who hastens to destroy all perish with his own.

4. Quickly now, O dear brothers, hasten to advance in Sacred Scripture, since you know that I have gathered so many great and varied works for you to increase your learning with the aid of the Lord's grace. Grant, as you read, in exchange your continual prayers for me to the Lord, since it is written 'pray for one another that you may be saved' [James 5:16]. O inestimable compassion and excellence of the creator, as it is promised to be of benefit to all if we pray for each other to the merciful Lord.

BOOK II¹

Preface

1. {The preceding book, completed with the Lord's aid, contains an introduction to religious readings. Its 33 chapters correspond in number to the age of the Lord when he gave eternal life to a world dead from sin and granted everlasting rewards to believers. Now it is time for us to go through the text of the present book that has been arranged according to another seven headings of secular letters; but this reckoning revolves constantly as week succeeds week and stretches to the end of the whole world.

2. It must be clearly understood that often Sacred Scripture uses the number seven² to mean continuous and perpetual. Thus David says, 'Seven times a day I praised you' [Ps. 118:164], although elsewhere he says, 'I will bless the Lord at all times; his praise shall be ever in my mouth' [Ps. 33:2], and Solomon, 'Wisdom has built her house, she has set up her seven columns' [Prov. 9:1]. In Exodus also the Lord says to Moses, 'You shall then make seven lamps and set them up the lamps that they shed their light on the opposite side' [Exod. 25:37]. And the Apocalypse in every way repeats this number in various contexts [Apoc. 1:4, 12, 16 etc.]. This

1 In the following translation the earlier (or 'draft') version and the final version of Book 2 have been conflated to create a single text. Where there are significant divergences the left-hand column shows the consensus of manuscripts representing the earlier redaction (traditions F and D in the apparatus of Mynors' edition), while the right-hand column presents the text of the final version authorized by Cassiodorus. Curly brackets { } enclose material lacking in the earlier redaction, square brackets [] material lacking in the final one. Angular brackets <> enclose material added by the editor of the Latin text or by the translator. For full discussion see the introduction, pp. 38–40.

2 Augustine, *Civ.* 11.31 (CCSL 48.351.20–23): ... *Septiens in die laudabo te; quod alibi alio modo dictum est: Semper laus eius in ore meo; et multa huius modi in divinis auctoritatibus reperiuntur, in quibus septenarius numerus, ut dixi, pro cuiusque rei universitate poni solet.* 'Seven times a day I will praise you; that elsewhere is stated in another way: Praise of him is always in my mouth; and many other statements of this sort are found in divine authorities, in which the number seven, as I have said, can stand for the aggregate of each thing.'

number brings us to that eternal time because it has no remainder;³ rightly therefore it is always used there where perpetual time is to be understood.

3. Thus the study of arithmetic is endowed with much praise, since the Lord, maker of things, arranged the universe by number, weight and measure, as Solomon says: 'You have disposed all things by measure and number and weight' [Wis. 11:21]. God's creation indeed has thus been made with number, since he himself says in the Gospel, 'But as for you, the very hairs of your head are all numbered' [Matt. 10:30]. The creature of God also is made with measure, as he himself says in the Gospel, 'But which of you by being anxious about it can add to his stature a single cubit?' [Matt. 6:27]. Also the prophet Isaiah says: 'Who marked off the heavens with a span, and who holds the earth enclosed in his hand?' [Isa. 40:12]. Finally, the creation of God is shown to have been made with weight as he says in the proverbs of Solomon, 'And he was weighing out the fountains of the waters' [Prov. 8:28] and a little after, 'When he was fixing fast the foundations of the earth, I was beside him' [Prov. 8:29–30]. Therefore each wonderful work of God is bounded by an indispensable limit. Since we believe that God created everything, we may to a certain extent learn how things are made. We are given to understand that the evil works of the devil are not defined by weight, measure and number, since the result of injustice is always the opposite of justice, as the thirteenth Psalm reminds us, 'Contrition and unhappiness is in their ways, and they do not know the way of peace' [Ps. 13:3]. Isaiah also says: 'They have left the Lord of Hosts and walk upon crooked ways' [Isa. 59:8; cf. 5:24]. Truly God is wonderful and most wise to make all his creations distinct by a particular arrangement, so that they are not marred by disgraceful confusion. Father Augustine has a detailed discussion of this subject in the fourth book of *Genesis Taken Word for Word*.⁴

4. It is our intention [and desire] to write down some material briefly on the art of grammar or rhetoric or on the disciplines. We must start with the principles of these matters, and must speak first of

4. Now then let us enter into the beginning of the second book, which we should attend to carefully; for the beginning is packed with etymologies and full of accounts of definitions. In this book we must first speak about

³ The number is prime.

⁴ Augustine, *De genesi ad litteram* 4 (CSEL 28.93–136).

the art of grammar, which is clearly the origin and basis of the liberal letters. Book is named from *liber*, that is, from the bark cut off and removed from the tree, on which the ancients wrote their poems before the discovery [there was a full supply] of papyrus.⁵ {In this derivation is our license to make books short or long; just as bark covers both shrubs and encloses large trees, so we may limit the length of books according to the nature of the subjects.} We ought to know, as Varro says,⁶ that all arts initially came into being for some useful purpose. Art is so called because it constrains (*artet*) and restricts us by its rules; others say that the word was drawn from the Greek *apo tes aretes*, that is, from excellence <of teaching>, which learned men call the knowledge of each <good> thing. Second, we will discuss the art of rhetoric, which we consider entirely indispensable and honourable particularly in civil cases because of its brilliance and eloquence. Third, logic, which is called dialectic. This discipline, to the extent that the secular teachers speak of it, separates truth from falsity by subtle and concise discussion. Fourth, mathematics, which includes four disciplines: arithmetic, geometry, music, and {astronomy} [the astronomical art]. In Latin indeed we can call [And we can call] the mathematical art in Latin ‘theoretical’. Although we can call all teaching theoretical (*doctrinale*), this term, common to all the disciplines, applies particularly to mathematics because of its excellence.

Likewise the Poet means Virgil, the Orator means Cicero,

Likewise among the Greeks the Poet means Homer,⁷ among the Latins,

5 See Maltby 33.7: *liber* (1) cortex of a tree: Isid. *Etym.* 17.6.16: *liber est corticis pars interior, dictus a liberato cortice, id est ablato: est enim medium quiddam inter lignum et corticem* (‘*liber* is the interior part of the cortex, so-called from the freeing of the cortex, i.e. its cutting away: it is something between the bark and the cortex’); (2) as book: Servius *ad Aen.* 11.554: *liber dicitur interior corticis pars ...; unde et liber dicitur in quo scribimus, quia ante usum chartae vel membranae de libris arborum volumina compaginabantur* [= Isid. *Etym.* 6.13.3] (‘*liber* is the name of the interior part of the cortex. ...; whence also it is called a *liber* in which we write, because before the use of papyrus and skins a book was put together from the bark of trees’). Cassiodorus, *Var.* 11.38.4 (24.455–25.456 Fridh): *Hinc et priscorum opuscula libros appellauit antiquitas; nam hodie quoque librum uiuentis ligni uocitamus exuuias* (‘Hence, antiquity gave the name of *liber* to the books of the ancients; for even today we call what is stripped from green wood *liber*’ [trans. Barnish, 160, slightly altered]).

6 We ought to know ... knowledge of each good thing: Varro (116–27 BC) frg. 117 Goetz–Schoell (= Funaioli, *Grammaticae Romanae Fragmenta* 233): *scire debemus ... bonae rei scientiam vocant*; cf. Servius, in *Donatum* (4.405.2–3 GLK): *ars dicta est ... quam Graeci unius cuiusque rei scientiam vocant*. Donatus omits *doctrinae* and *bonae*. See also Maltby, 54–55.

7 Seneca, *Ep.* 58.17: *Homerum intellegas, cum audieris poetam* (‘Understand Homer, when

Virgil; the Orator among the Greeks
means Demosthenes, among Latin
speakers, Cicero,

although it seems that there are many orators and poets

in Latin; eloquent Greece offers this in each language.
honour to Homer and Demosthenes.

Mathematics is the science that considers quantity in the abstract; by definition an abstract quantity is what we treat by reckoning alone after we have mentally separated it from matter or other accidentals.⁸

5. Thus the order of the entire book is promised, as if on security. Now with the Lord's support, let us show through its own divisions and definitions how each of them has been promised [they have been promised]. There are two ways of learning something, since the written line both carefully instructs the sight and afterwards the hearing of the ears now prepared enters in. And we will not pass over in silence those authors, both Greek and Latin, who have been important in explaining the matters we have been talking about. All who are [Anyone who is eager] to read may, with the guidance of this summary, understand the words of the earlier writers more clearly.

{ 1. Grammar
2. Rhetoric
3. Dialectic

4. Arithmetic
5. Music
6. Geometry

7. Astronomy }
{ I. Grammar }

1. Grammar receives its name from the letters of the alphabet as the sound of the word itself shows its derivation.⁹ Cadmus is said to have first

you hear the word poet'). Iustinian, *Inst.* 1.2.2. (ed. Krueger, 1): *sicuti cum poetam dicimus nec addimus nomen, subauditur apud Graecos egregius Homerus, apud nos Vergilius* ('Just as when we say poet and do not add a name, it is understood among the Greeks that he is the famous Homer, for us, it is Virgil').

8 Cf. *Inst.* 2.3.6; 2.3.21.

9 Marius Victorinus (4th century AD), *Gramm.* 6.188.1: *grammatica... dicta... ἀπὸ τῶν γραμμάτων* ('grammar is so-called from the Greek word for letters'). Augustine, *Contra Cresconium* 1.14.17: *a litteris denominata est grammatica, quoniam Graece grammata litterae dicuntur* ('grammar is named from letters, since in Greek letters are called *grammata*'). Augustine, *Doct.Chr.* 3.29.40: *Nam litterae, a quibus ipsa grammatica nomen accepit,*

discovered only sixteen which he gave to the most eager Greeks.¹⁰ They, with their lively minds, supplied the rest.

Helenus and Priscian spoke subtly on their formulae and characteristics in the excellent Greek	Helenus in Greek ¹¹ and Priscian ¹² in Latin dealt subtly with their shape and characteristics.
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Grammar is the skill of speaking stylishly gathered from famous poets and writers;¹³ its function is to compose prose and verse without fault; its purpose is to please by the impeccable skill of polished speech or writing. Although writers of previous times have treated the art of grammar in various degrees, and have had the glory of fame in their own times, such as Palemon, Phocas, Probus and Censorinus,¹⁴ we are pleased to place

grammata enim Graeci litteras uocant... ('For letters, from which grammar itself takes its name – for the Greeks call letters *grammata*').

10 Pliny, *NH* 7.192: ... *in Graeciam attulisse a Phoenice Cadmus sedecim numero* ... ('... Cadmus brought sixteen [letters] from Phoenicia to Greece').

11 Helenus, a grammarian who is also mentioned at *Var.* 8.12.5 (314.41–44 Fridh): *Hinc Helenus auctor Graecorum plura dixit eximie uirtutem eius compositionemque subtilissima narratione describens, ut in ipso initio possit agnosci magnarum copia litterarum* ('Of the [alphabet], the Greek author Helenus has said much and well, describing the nature and form of letters in a most exact account, so that the wealth of noble literature can be understood in its very origin' [trans. Barnish, 103–04]). The identity of Helenus was a matter of some discussion in connection with Mommsen's edition of the *Variae*. In a note on page 243 of his edition he refers to an article by G. Knaack that considers the two passages where Cassiodorus discusses Helenus and his contribution to the study of the alphabet (589–90, 600–01). Knaack finds that Cassiodorus has taken his material from Hyginus, and, following a suggestion of Wilamowitz, offers the name of the Greek historian Hellanicus as the correct reading here. Knaack's view was already questioned by Traube in his index to Mommsen's edition, in which he refers to the work of Kremmer. Kremmer, 79 note 2, rejects the suggestion of Hellanicus, and correctly notes that Cassiodorus is here not speaking of Helenus as dealing with the *inventor* of the alphabet but involved in a discussion about the shape and characteristics of the letters. He sees a connection with Priscian and so correctly regards Helenus as a grammarian. He does not know who he is. It is my view that perhaps Helenus is to be equated with the grammarian Helladius, who wrote an alphabetical lexicon and was active in Constantinople around AD 425 (Kaster 67, p. 289). In any case, Cassiodorus knew nothing about Helenus/Helladius or his work, no more than, during his stay in Constantinople, he knew of Priscian.

12 Priscian (end of 5th–first third of 6th century), author of important works on Latin grammar. Kaster 126 (pp. 346–48).

13 Ammonius (fl. AD 550), *In Porphyrii Isagogen* 1.12–13 (*CAG* 4.3) Busse: ... γραμματική ἐστιν ἐμπειρία τῶν παρὰ ποιηταῖς καὶ συγγραφεύσιν ὡς ἐπὶ τὸ πολὺ λεγόμενων.

14 Palemon: Q. Remmius Palaemon (1st century AD); *OCD* 1308. Phocas (also Focas; end

Donatus¹⁵ first, who is particularly suitable for children and beginners. We have left a double commentary so that, although he is {clear} <in Latin>, by a second set of explanations, he may become even clearer. {We have discovered that St Augustine wrote on the same subject to educate the simple brothers briefly.¹⁶ We have left these for you to read, so that the uneducated will lack nothing to prepare them for the heights of such great knowledge.}

2. Donatus in the second part¹⁷ makes the following divisions: the spoken word; the letter; the syllable; the feet; the accents; punctuation marks and pause marks; the eight parts of speech; figures; etymologies; spelling.

A spoken word is air set in motion, perceivable by the hearing so far as it is in it.

A letter is the smallest part of the spoken word.

A syllable is a collection of letters, or the delivery of one vowel, which can be counted in time.

A foot is a particular measure of syllables and times.

Accent is correct pronunciation according to the rules.

A punctuation or pause mark is an open [suitable] pause in measured delivery.

There are eight parts of speech: noun, pronoun, verb, adverb, participle, conjunction, preposition, interjection.

A noun is a part of speech that has case. It signifies a body or thing either proper or common: proper, as Rome, Tiber, common, as city, river.

A pronoun is a part of speech that replaces a noun. It signifies almost the same thing as the noun and at times has gender and number.

A verb is a part of speech that has tense and person but does not have case.

An adverb is a part of speech that added to a verb explains its significance and completes it, as 'now I shall do (or not do).'

of 4th/5th century AD): Kaster 121 (pp. 339–41). Probus (4th century AD): Kaster 127 (pp. 348–50). Censorinus (3rd century AD): *OCD* 308.

15 Donatus: Aelius Donatus (mid-4th century AD); Kaster 52 (pp. 275–78).

16 Augustine, *De grammatica* (*Ars sancti Augustini pro fratrum mediocritate breuiata*): *CPL* 1557. Law has defended the possible authenticity of this brief treatise. Keil, who did not believe the work authentic, produced a few pages of extracts (5.494–96 GLK). There is an annotated edition of these extracts by Bettetini (163–71, 216–20). The most recent complete text is that of C.F. Weber (7–31). Kaster 20 (pp. 246–47), who does not seem to know of Law's article, regards the treatise as suppositious. When Cassiodorus first sketched the second book of the *Institutiones*, he did not know of this work. See Courcelle, *Late Latin Writers*, 340 and note 8.

17 Donatus, *Ars maior*: spoken word: 603.2 Holtz; letter: 603.6; syllable: 605.11; foot: 607.6; parts of speech: 613.2–3; noun: 614.2–3; pronoun: 629.2–3; verb: 632.5; adverb: 640.2–3; participle: 644.2–4; conjunction: 646.14; preposition: 648.4–5; interjection: *Ars minor* 602.2.

A participle is a part of speech so called because it shares part of a noun and part of a verb; for it takes gender and case from the noun, and tense and meaning from the verb; number and form from both.

A conjunction is a part of speech that connects and orders the statement.

A preposition is a part of speech that placed before another part of speech either changes or completes or diminishes its meaning.

An interjection is a part of speech that marks the emotion of the mind without forming a word.

Figures are transformations of speech or statement, set down for the sake of ornament. Sacerdos,¹⁸ a [certain] writer on this art <of grammar>, collected 98 of them, but he includes in that number those that Donatus classifies as faults. It seems to me too harsh to call them faults, since they are supported by the models of authors and especially by the authority of divine law. These are shared by grammarians and orators, and are nicely suited to each group. The subjects of etymology and spelling should also be added, on which some [others] have certainly written. Etymology is either a true or likely interpretation that explains the source of words. Spelling, or correctness of writing unspoiled by error, puts the hand and the tongue in harmony.

3. This brief statement {about definitions} should suffice. But those who want to learn more and more fully should read the book together with its preface,

which we have put together because of our interest, i.e., the *Art* of Donatus in which we have inserted a book on orthography and one on etymology and a fourth also, the treatise of Sacerdos *On Figures of Speech*.¹⁹

which I have had written on the art of grammar,

where the diligent reader can

discover

find

what he knows has been set down for

¹⁸ Sacerdos: Marcus Plotius Sacerdos (second half of 3rd century AD); Kaster 132 (pp.352–53).

¹⁹ Sacerdos, *De Schematibus et Tropis* = *Artes Grammaticae* I (6.455–70 GLK).

the art of grammar. But since the content rather of the art of grammar has been mentioned, we have taken care to add some materials on the rules for the noun and the verb that rightly Aristotle taught.²⁰

Now let us go on to the divisions and definitions of the art of rhetoric, which, being a wide-ranging and abundant discipline, has been extensively treated by many famous authors.

II. Rhetoric

1. Rhetoric is said to derive from *apo tu rhetoreuin*, that is, the abundance of flowing speech.²¹ The art of rhetoric, as the teachers of secular letters teach, is the knowledge of speaking effectively in civil cases.²² Therefore the orator is, as has been said, ‘a good man skilled in speaking’ in civil cases.²³ The task of the orator is to speak in such a way as to persuade;²⁴ his goal is to persuade by his manner of speaking, insofar as the nature of the circumstances and the individuals involved in civil cases seems to allow. Let us

20 In version Φ excerpts from Martianus Capella (last quarter 5th century AD), *De nuptiis Philologiae et Mercurii*, follow. Δ omits these and presents the following: ‘Let whoever wishes seek the rest in another volume, for I, who have made the excerpts (not Cassiodorus!), have forgotten the rest while hastening to more weighty matters or perhaps overlooked them’; and adds excerpts from Quintilian II–VII (cf. *RLM* 501–04), and a list of the parts of speech (for which see Mynors’ edition, p. xxxvi, note), concluding with the words *Incipit in nomine Patris et Filii et Spiritus sancti*.

21 See Maltby, 526–27.

22 Ammonius, *In Porphyrii Isagogen* (CAG 4.3) 1.14–15 Busse: ...ῥητορικὴ ἐστὶ δύναμις τεχνικὴ πειθανοῦ λόγου ἐν πράγματι πολιτικῷ τέλος ἔχουσα τὸ εὖ λέγειν; Quintilian 2.15.38: ... *rhetorice esse bene dicendi scientiam*... ; Fortunatianus 1.1 (81.4 *RLM*; 65.4 Montefusco): *Quid est rhetorica? bene dicendi scientia*.

23 Fortunatianus 1.1 (81.5–6 *RLM*; 65.5–7 Montefusco): *Quid est orator: vir bonus dicendi peritus. Quod est oratoris officium? bene dicere in civilibus quaestionibus*.

24 Quintilian 2.15.5: *Cicero pluribus locis scripsit officium oratoris esse ‘dicere adposite ad persuadendum’* (‘Cicero in more than one passage defined the duty of the orator as “speaking in a persuasive manner”’ [trans. Butler, 1.303 LCL]); cf. Cicero, *De inventione* 1.5.6: *Quare hanc oratoriam facultatem in eo genere ponemus, ut eam civilis scientiae partem esse dicamus. Officium autem eius facultatis videtur esse dicere apposite ad persuasionem; finis persuadere dictione* (‘Therefore we will classify oratorical ability as a part of political science. The function of eloquence seems to be to speak in a manner suited to persuade an audience, the end is to persuade by speech’ [trans. Hubbell, 15 LCL]).

therefore take up some matters briefly because we should be able to understand the sum total and almost the entire art by a survey of some of its divisions. According to Fortunatianus, a recent writer on the art, civil cases are defined as those ‘that the ordinary mind can understand, i.e., which anyone can understand since they deal with what is just and good’.²⁵

2.²⁶ There are five parts of rhetoric: discovery, arrangement, style, memory, delivery.

Discovery is the thinking out of matters true or plausible to make the case convincing.

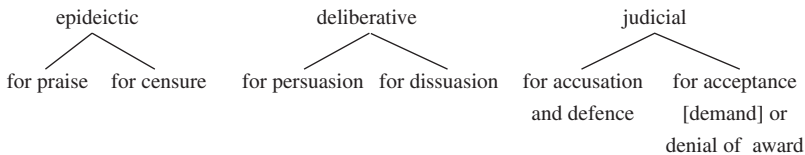
Arrangement is the attractive distribution in the proper arrangement of the matter devised.

Style is the selection of words proper to the matter devised.

Memory is a firm retention in the mind of the subject matter and the words.

Delivery is the suitable control of voice and body suited to the worth of the subject matter and the words.

3.²⁷ There are three main kinds of cases:



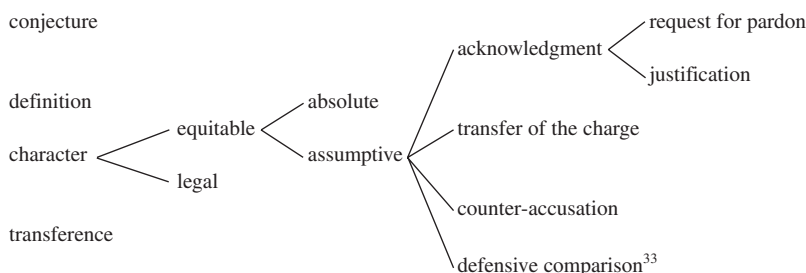
25 Fortunatianus 1.1 (81.9–11 *RLM*; 66.2–4 Montefusco): *Quae sunt civiles quaestiones? quae in communem animi conceptionem possunt cadere, id est, quas unusquisque potest intellegere, ut cum quaeritur de aequo et bono*. Δ adds: “special cases’ (*causa*) is a matter involving a controversy conducted by a speech with the introduction of definite individuals; ‘general question’ (*quaestio*) is a matter involving a controversy conducted by a speech without the introduction of definite individuals”; material taken from Cicero, *De inventione* 1.6.8 (the translation of which by Hubbell, 17 [LCL] I have used here).

26 The material of this section is taken directly from Cicero, *De inventione* 1.7.9.

27 The material of this section is from Fortunatianus 1.1 (81.12–20 *RLM*; 66.2–16 Montefusco). Δ adds: Every function of a speech is one or another of three ... In Aristotle the term *contionalis* (‘belonging or proper to public meetings’ [*OLD*]) appears in place of deliberative (cf. Quintilian 3.4.1)... The deliberative kind is that which takes counsel; the judicial kind is that which judges on cases... ΕΠΙΔΕΙΚΤΙΚΟΝ for display and ΕΓΚΟΝΙΑΔΟΤΙΚΟ (i.e., ἐγκωμιαστικόν) is called for praise on the more favourable part (cf. Quintilian 3.4.12–14) and ΠΑΝΗΓΥΡΙΚΟΝ and ΣΥΜΒΟΥΛΕΥΤΙΚΟΝ and is called for counselling and ΔΙΚΑΝΙΚΟΝ.

The epideictic type is seen when we point to some subject in which there is praise or censure.²⁸ The deliberative type contains persuasion and dissuasion.²⁹ The judicial type contains accusation and defence, or suit for or denial of an award.

4. The issue is the matter in dispute; it consists of accusation and reply.³⁰ The issues of cases are either those <arising out of circumstances and> involving reasoning, or legal <having to do with statutory law and documents>.³¹ Cases that involve reasoning as it relates to general cases are four in number:³²



But, as Cicero correcting himself says in *On the Orator*, transference must be counted among the legal issues,³⁴ for also Fortunatianus says: ‘We under-

28 Δ adds: that is, when by a description of this sort someone is described or known, as in Psalm 28 and in other places and many Psalms, as *O Lord, thy mercy is in heaven, and thy truth reacheth even to the clouds. Thy justice is as the mountains of the God* and so forth (Psalm 35:6–7).

29 Δ adds: that is, what to seek, what to avoid, what to teach, what to prevent.

30 Fortunatianus 1.11(12) (89.22 *RLM*; 81.3–5 Montefusco) and 1.2 (81.1–2 *RLM*; 67.1–3 Montefusco). Δ adds: or *constitutio* (‘formulation of the point at issue’, *OLD*). Some call the issue *constitutio*, others *quaestio* (‘argument’, *OLD*), others what comes up from the *quaestio*.

31 Fortunatianus 1.11 (12) (89.25–29 *RLM*; 81.8–11 Montefusco).

32 Fortunatianus 1.11 (12) (89.29–32 *RLM*; 81.12–16 Montefusco). To ‘juridical’ and ‘practical’ Δ adds: ΔΙΚΟΔΙΚΙΚΗ and ΠΡΑΓΜΑΤΙΚΗ.

33 Conjecture: Fortunatianus 1.11(12) (90.1–2 *RLM*; 81.17–18 Montefusco); definition: Fortunatianus 1.13 (91.5–6 *RLM*; 84.5–6 Montefusco); character: cf. Fortunatianus 1.14–17 (15–18) (92.4–94.23 *RLM*; 86.10–92.1 Montefusco). To ‘transfer of the charge’, ‘counter-accusation’, and ‘defensive comparison’, Δ adds ΜΕΤΑΣΤΑΣΙΣ, ΑΝΤΕΓΚΛΗΜΑ (corrupt), and ΑΝΤΙΣΤΑΣΙΣ (from Quintilian 7.4.8–14).

34 *Rhetorica ad Herennium* 1.11.19: ‘The issue is called Legal when some controversy turns upon the letter of a text or arises from an implication therein. A Legal issue is divided into six subtypes: Letter and Spirit, Conflicting Laws, Ambiguity, Definition, Transference, and Reasoning from Analogy’ (trans. Caplan, 35 LCL).

stand transference only as legal. Why so? Because no transference, i.e., no assignment, can exist without a law.³⁵ There are five legal issues:³⁶ letter and spirit; conflicting laws; ambiguity; <reasoning from> analogy or deduction; legal definition.

5. An issue is *conjectural* when a fact charged by one side is denied by the opposition.³⁷ An issue is *definitive* when we argue that the fact that is charged is not what is alleged,³⁸ but show by the use of definition what it is really is. *Character* <or nature> arises when the question is what kind of thing it is. When a case arises from the fact of the meaning and the type of an act, it is called the general issue. [It is called a transferred issue] When the case depends on the point that one who is bringing the case appears not to be the proper person <or it is not brought against the proper person> or not before the proper court or at the proper time or according to the proper law or with the proper charge or with the proper penalty it is called a *transferred* issue [a transference is added (it is added to transference)] because the action seems to require transference and alteration.³⁹ A *juridical* case⁴⁰ is one in which the question is the nature of what is just and right and the principle of reward or punishment. The *customary* issue arises when there is consideration of what law there is in accordance with civil custom and equity. The *absolute* issue is one that in itself includes the question of right and injury. The *assumptive* issue is one that has no solid basis of its own for refutation but takes up some external defence. *Acknowledgment*, as we have shown [will show], relates to penitents. It occurs when the defendant does not make a defence of the action but pleads for pardon.⁴¹ *Rejection* of the

35 Fortunatianus 1.11 (12) (89.30–32 *RLM*; 81.12–16 Montefusco).

36 Fortunatianus 1.22 (23) (97.26–29 *RLM*; 97.6–10 Montefusco). Δ adds: ΠΗΤΟΝ Κ. ΔΙΑΝΟΙΝ (*sic*), ΑΝΤΙΝΟΜΙΑ, ΑΜΦΙΒΟΛΙΑ and ΣΥΛΛΟΓΙΣΜΟΝ (from Quintilian 3.6.46). See also *Rhetorica ad Herennium* 1.11.19 (above, note 31).

37 Fortunatianus 1.11 (12) (90.1–2 *RLM*; 81.17–18 Montefusco).

38 Fortunatianus 1.13 (91.5–6 *RLM*; 84.5–6 Montefusco).

39 From ‘arises when the question is’ to ‘transference and alteration’ is a direct quotation (with minor variants) of Cicero, *De inventione* 1.8.10.

40 From the beginning of this sentence to the end of the section is a direct quotation (with a reorganization of part of the text as well as minor variants) of Cicero, *De inventione* 1.11.14–15.

41 Cassiodorus, *Exp.Ps.* 6.338–39: *Sola est ergo necessaria quae dicitur concessio, cum reus non id quod factum est defendit, sed ut ignoscatur expostulat* (‘So the only approach necessary is that called concession, in which the defendant does not defend what has been done, but asks to be pardoned’ [trans. Walsh, 1.98]); *Exp.Ps.* 31.24–27: *Status autem principalis huius causae concessio est, quae cunctis paenitentibus datur* (‘The essential point of this plea is the concession granted to all who repent’ [trans. Walsh, 1.305]); *Exp.Ps.* 50.56–58: *statum esse, qui dicitur concessio. Concessio est enim, cum reus non id quod fecit aliqua concertatione defendit,*

charge occurs when the defendant tries by the force of argument or influence to shift the charge from himself and his responsibility to another. *Counter-accusation* occurs when one argues that an act was just because someone was unjustly injured [has unjustly injured] beforehand. *Comparison* is used when it is argued that one of the parties did something good or useful, and that the act in dispute was committed in order to make that happen. *Exculpation* arises when the deed is in fact admitted, but blame set aside. The plea for exculpation has three subdivisions: ignorance, accident, necessity. The *plea for mercy* arises when the defendant confesses the crime and premeditation, and yet seeks pardon; this type can rarely occur.

6. The issue of the *letter and spirit*⁴² of the law comes up when the words themselves seem to be at variance with the intention of the writer of the law. The issue of *conflicting laws* arises when two or more laws disagree with one another. *Ambiguity* arises when the text seems to have two or more meanings. *Inference*, which is also called *reasoning by analogy*, arises when something is understood from the text {that has not been written there}. *Legal definition* arises when the meaning of a word is sought, as in a definitive ruling in which it occurs. Therefore, by some too confidently the rational and legal issues are counted as 18. But according to the rhetorical writings of Cicero⁴³ there are 19, because he set transference among the major rational issues. As a result Cicero, as stated above, correcting himself, added transference to his legal issues.⁴⁴

7. Every controversy,⁴⁵ as Cicero says, is either simple or complex, and if it is complex, we must consider whether it involves several questions or some comparison. A *simple* case is one that consists of one intrinsic question, such as shall we declare war on Corinth or not? A *complex* case is made up of several questions in which there are several inquiries, in the following manner: whether Carthage should be destroyed, or given back to the Carthaginians, or should a colony be sent there? A case involving

sed ut ignoscatur postulat absolute ('...the status of the argument is that called "concession"; in this the defendant does not defend his action by argument, but simply asks pardon' [trans. Walsh, 1.494]). Cf. Astell, 58–61.

42 From the beginning of this section through the end of the sentence beginning 'Legal definition' is a quotation of Cicero, *De inventione* 1.13.17, with changes in wording to fit the current context.

43 I.e., *De inventione*.

44 See note 33, above.

45 The whole of section 7 is a quotation (with minor variants) from Cicero, *De inventione* 1.13.17.

comparison arises when the question concerns what is more or most desirable in the following way: should an army be sent to Macedonia against Philip to aid our allies or kept in Italy so that the greatest force possible may oppose Hannibal?

8. There are five types of cases:⁴⁶ honourable, remarkable, petty, ambiguous, obscure. An *honourable* case is one in which the listener's mind is immediately favourable. The *challenging* case is one that has alienated the minds of those who are about to hear it. The *petty* case is one that is disregarded by the listener and seems one he need not especially attend to. An *ambiguous* case {is} one in which the verdict is doubtful or the case partakes of both the honourable and the discreditable so that it receives both good will and disfavour. The *obscure* case is one in which either the listeners are slow to understand or the case is judged to involve [involves] matters that are more difficult to grasp.

9. There are six parts in a rhetorical speech: introduction, statement of the facts, division, proof, refutation, conclusion.⁴⁷ The *introduction* is speech that suitably prepares the mind of the listener for the rest of the discourse.⁴⁸ The *statement of the facts* sets forth the events that have occurred or might have occurred.⁴⁹ The *division* is that part of a speech that, if it is correctly handled, makes the whole speech clear and apparent.⁵⁰ *Proof* is that part which by setting out the arguments gives credit, authority, and a foundation to our case.⁵¹ *Refutation* is the section in which our opponents' proof is weakened or damaged by the presentation of arguments.⁵² The *conclusion* ends and closes the entire speech⁵³ sometimes with a tear-jerking recapitulation of the chief points.

10. Although Cicero, the chief light of Latin eloquence, set these matters out fully and carefully in various books, and covered them in his two books *On the Art of Rhetoric*⁵⁴ (and I am thought to have left you a commentary by

46 The whole of section 8 is a quotation (with minor variants) from Cicero, *De inventione* 1.15.20.

47 A quotation from Cicero, *De inventione* 1.14.19.

48 A quotation from Cicero, *De inventione* 1.15.20.

49 A quotation from Cicero, *De inventione* 1.19.27.

50 A quotation, with changes to fit the context, from Cicero, *De inventione* 1.22.31.

51 A quotation from Cicero, *De inventione* 1.24.34.

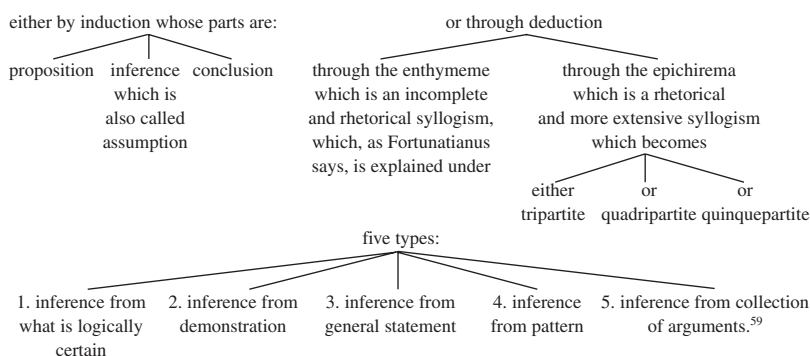
52 A quotation, with the omission of 'or disproven' (*aut infirmatur*), from Cicero, *De inventione* 1.42.78.

53 A quotation from Cicero, *De inventione* 1.52.98.

54 Cicero, *De inventione*.

Marius Victorinus⁵⁵ on these from [in] my library), nevertheless [also] Quintilian, an outstanding teacher after the flood of eloquence of Cicero, very ably expanded his teaching. Quintilian begins the education of the ‘good man skilled in speaking’ at an early age. He has shown that the orator must be educated in all the noble arts and disciplines of letters if he is to be the right choice of the entire state for its defence. We have decided therefore to join the two books of Cicero *On the Art of Rhetoric* and the twelve of Quintilian’s *Institutes*⁵⁶ so that the codex will not be too large and so that both of these indispensable works are always ready and at hand. We have fashioned [are fashioning] the detailed and exact three-volume work on the subject by the recent teacher Fortunatianus⁵⁷ into a suitable hand-sized book, to avoid the reader’s boredom and still suitably introduce him to what he needs. Let those who like brevity read him; for although he did not expand his work into many books, his discussions of most subjects are sharp and penetrating. You will find these books together with their preface in one collection.

11. Rhetorical argumentation is treated {as follows}:⁵⁸



55 Marius Victorinus, *Explanatum in Rhetoricam (sci. De inventione) M. Tulli Ciceronis Libri duo*, RLM 155–304.

56 Quintilian, *Institutionis Oratoriae Libri XII*.

57 Fortunatianus, *Artis Rhetoricae Libri III*.

58 Cicero, *De inventione* 1.31.51: *Omnis igitur argumentatio aut per inductionem tractanda est aut per ratiocinationem* ('All argumentation, then, is to be carried on either by induction or by deduction' [trans. Hubbell, 93 LCL]).

59 Fortunatianus 2.29 (118.33–34 RLM; 136.12–14 Montefusco): *Quod sunt genera enthymematum? quinque, ἐλεγκτικόν, δεικτικόν, γνωμικόν, παραδειγματικόν, συλλογιστικόν*. Cassiodorus translates these terms into Latin: *convincibile, ostentabile, sententiale, exemplabile*, and *collectivum*, respectively.

*Argumentation*⁶⁰ is said, as it were, to be the statement of a clever mind;⁶¹ it is the statement itself in which we [demonstrably] seek a {demonstrable} proof.⁶² *Induction* is a statement that by [from] unassailable facts gains assent of the one with whom it began,⁶³ whether among philosophers or rhetoricians or discussants in general. The *major premise* of an induction necessarily points to similarities with one or more matters that have been granted. The *minor premise* of an induction which is also called the *assumption* takes up the matter in dispute for which the similarities have been presented. The *conclusion* of the induction either proves the admission of the minor premise or demonstrates what is constructed from it.⁶⁴

12. *Deduction* is a statement by which we prove that which is at issue.⁶⁵ An *enthymeme* <Latin: mental intention> is what writers in the art usually call an incomplete syllogism.⁶⁶ This form of proof is made up of two parts. It employs the means of gaining credence by passing over the rules of the

60 Before argumentation Δ adds: 'Propositions are simple and double or multiple, when several charges are joined together.'

61 *Argumentatio... quasi argutae mentis oratio*. Another of Cassiodorus's etymologies. Cf. *Exp.Ps.* 33.214–15: *argumentum est autem argutae mentis indicium*. Maltby, 51.

62 Fortunatianus 2.28 (118.8–9 RLM; 135.3–4 Montefusco): *Quid est argumentatio? oratio ipsa, qua exequimur argumentum quo probamus*.

63 Cicero, *De inventione* 1.31.51.

64 Cicero, *De inventione* 1.32.54: *Ita fit hoc genus argumentandi tripartitum: prima pars ex similitudine constat una pluribusve; altera ex eo quod concedi volumus cuius causa similitudines adhibitae sunt; tertia ex conclusione, quae aut confirmat concessionem aut quid ex ea conficiatur ostendit* ('Thus this style of argument is threefold: the first part consists of one or more similar cases, the second of the point that we wish to have conceded, for the sake of which the similar cases have been cited; the third is the conclusion that reinforces the concession or shows what results follow from it' [trans. Hubbell, 97 LCL]).

65 Cicero, *De inventione* 1.34.57: *Ratiocinatio est oratio ex ipsa re probabile aliquid eliciens quod expositum...* ('Deduction or syllogistic reasoning is a form of argument that draws a probable conclusion from the fact under consideration itself' [trans. Hubbell, 99 LCL]). Fortunatianus 2.28 (118.24–25; 135.23–136.1 Montefusco): *Quid ratiocinatio? quo aliquid adprobamus. Hoc Graeci quid vocant? enthymema...*

66 *Exp.Ps.* 20.124–27: *Enthymema, quod latine interpretatur mentis conceptio, syllogismus est constans ex una propositione et conclusione, quem dialectici dicunt rhetoricum syllogismum, quia eo frequenter utuntur oratores pro compendio suo* ('Enthymema, rendered in Latin as *mentis conceptio*, is a syllogism consisting of one proposition and a conclusion, which dialecticians call a rhetorical syllogism because orators often deploy it to attain the brevity they seek' [trans. Walsh, 1.211–12]). Cf. *Exp.Ps.* 93.164–65. Cf. [Boethius] *Ex demonstratione artis geometricae excerpta* (= *Schriften der römischen Feldmesser*, 1, ed. Blume–Lachmann–Rudorff, Berlin: Georg Reimer, 1848) 395:2–4: *enthymema, qui rhetoricus est syllogismus, quod Latine interpretatur mentis conceptio, quem imperfectum solent artigraphi nuncupare*.

syllogism, as the following: 'if we are to avoid the storm, we must not sail'. It is complete in a major premise <and conclusion>⁶⁷ and thus is judged more suitable to orators than logicians. We shall speak of the logical syllogism in its proper place.

13. An *enthymeme involving manifest demonstration* is one that persuades by clear reasons, as Cicero makes use of it in his speech *For Milo*: 'And so you sit in this court as avengers of his death whose life you would be unwilling to restore even if you believed you could.'⁶⁸ The *enthymeme by demonstration* constrains by the display of a definite fact and is exemplified in Cicero *Against Catiline*: 'Yet he lives. Lives? In fact he actually comes into the senate.'⁶⁹ The *enthymeme involving an inference from a general statement* is one that involves a general statement such as Terence's 'Yielding gains friends, truth hatred.'⁷⁰ An *enthymeme involving a comparison* threatens a similar outcome by a comparison with another example, as Cicero in his *Philippics* <says>: 'I am surprised, Antony, that you do not fear the end of those whose model you imitate.'⁷¹ An *enthymeme that involves a collection* of arguments arises <when> the arguments that have been used are brought together, as Cicero says in his speech *For Milo*: 'Did he then desire, when some people were sure to protest, to do what he refused to do when all would have been delighted? He did not venture to slay Clodius when he might have done so lawfully, opportunely, and did he have no hesitation in slaying him unlawfully, inopportunely, and at the risk of his own life?''⁷²

14. Furthermore, there is a second definition of the enthymeme according to Victorinus.⁷³ As has already been stated, an enthymeme made up of one major premise is like this: 'If we are to avoid the storm, we should not attempt to sail.' Of a minor premise alone, for example: 'There are those who say that the world proceeds without divine governance.' Of a conclusion alone, for example, 'The divine judgment is therefore true.' Of a major and a

67 These words, added by Mynors, are omitted by Ω, and perhaps should be omitted here. See below, section 14.

68 Cicero, *Pro Milone* 29.79; cf. Quintilian 5.14.2.

69 Cicero, *In Catalinam* 1.1.2.

70 Terence, *Andria* 68.

71 Cicero, *Philippicae* 2.1.1.

72 Cicero, *Pro Milone* 15.41; cf. Quintilian 5.14.3.

73 Mynors thinks that Cassiodorus has taken this material from the commentary on Cicero's *Topica* by Marius Victorinus (Mynors, 191), a work that is no longer extant. More likely the material in sections 13 to 15 comes from the lost *De syllogismis hypotheticis* of Victorinus. See P. Hadot, 157–60.

minor premise as: 'If he is my enemy, he dies; he is an enemy.' And because it lacks a conclusion it is called an enthymeme.

15. The *epichirema* follows. As we said earlier, the *epichirema* is a more extensive working out of the rhetorical syllogism derived from deduction,⁷⁴ differing in extent and length of statement from the logical syllogism.⁷⁵ It is accordingly given over to the rhetoricians. A tripartite epichirematic syllogism is made up of three parts: major premise, minor premise, conclusion. The quadripartite type has four parts: major premise, minor premise, a demonstration attached to the major or minor premise, and a conclusion. The quinquepartite type has five parts: major premise with {its} demonstration, minor premise with {its} demonstration, and a conclusion. Cicero used it in the following way in his *Art of Rhetoric*: 'If deliberative and epideictic are types (*genera*) of arguments, they cannot properly be regarded as species of some other type (*genus*) of argument; for the same object can be the type of one thing and species of another, but cannot be genus and species in the same thing';⁷⁶ and so on to the extent that the parts of this syllogism are included. But I shall see <how far> for [in] other species the reader can exercise his own talent.

16. Fortunatianus, who was previously mentioned, in his third book discusses the orator's memory, delivery, and vocal quality.⁷⁷ A monk derives from this book, however, a certain profit, when he is seen to appropriate for his task, without reproach, the techniques that they developed to suit their debates; he will, with due precautions, safeguard the memory of divine scripture, when he has learned from the aforesaid both the power and quality of memory; he will grasp the art of delivery in reciting the divine law; he gains control of vocal quality in the chanting [repeated reciting] of the Psalter. Thus, although he occupies himself with secular works {for some time}, the monk returns, instructed, to holy work.

17. In accordance with our plan, let us now take up logic or dialectic as it is sometimes called. Some prefer to call this a discipline, others an art, saying that since it deals in some degree with apodeictic, i.e., true [probable] discussions, it ought to be called a discipline; since {, however,} it treats of likelihood {and matters of opinion} <as they are sophistic syllogisms>, it

⁷⁴ See the table, section 11, above.

⁷⁵ Fortunatianus 2.29 (118.30–32 *RLM*; 136.8–11 Montefusco): *Quid est epichirema? exsecutio sive adprobatio propositionis aut adsumptionis. In epichiremate possumus inducere locos communes et exempla et prosopopoeias? possumus; est enim epichirema latior exsecutio.*

⁷⁶ Cicero, *De inventione* 1.9.12.

⁷⁷ Fortunatianus 3.13–20 (128.20–133.2 *RLM*; 155.8–164.2 Montefusco).

should be called an art. Thus it earns each name by virtue of its subject matter. {Father Augustine, guided, I believe, by this kind of reasoning, called grammar and rhetoric disciplines,⁷⁸ following Varro;⁷⁹ Capella also entitled his work *The Seven Disciplines*.⁸⁰ It is called a discipline since it is fully learned,⁸¹ and it is rightly called by such a name since the rule of unchangeable truth always serves these things.}⁸²

III. Dialectic

1. The first philosophers gave a place to dialectic in their teachings, [in the proofs of their own statements] but did not know how to formalize it to the technique of an art. After them, Aristotle, like the careful student [commentator] on all disciplines that he was, systematized the methods of this field that previously had not been subject to definite precepts. By writing outstanding works he [this man] brought great praise to the school of Greece. And Roman writers, refusing to let him remain a foreigner, have conveyed him to Roman eloquence by translation and commentary.

78 Augustine, *Retractationes* 1.6 (PL 32.591): *Per idem tempus quo Mediolani fui... etiam disciplinarum libros conatus sum scribere... Sed earum solum de Grammatica librum absolvere potui, quem postea de armario nostro perdi; et de Musica sex volumina... De aliis vero quinque disciplinis... de Dialectica, de Rhetorica, de Geometria, de Arithmetica, de Philosophia, sola principia remanserunt, quae tamen etiam ista perdidimus...* ('During the same period in which I was at Milan... I also began to write books on the disciplines... But of these I was only able to finish the book *On Grammar*, which I later lost from my bookcase, and *On Music* in six books... Of the other five disciplines also: *On Dialectic*, *On Rhetoric*, *On Geometry*, *On Arithmetic*, *On Philosophy* <Dialectic?> only the beginnings remained. And I have even lost these...').

79 Varro's treatise, *The Nine Disciplines*, is lost, but references to it in later literature indicate that it considered grammar, dialectic, rhetoric, music, geometry, arithmetic, astronomy, medicine, and architecture. See Mauch, 40–41.

80 Martianus Capella, *De nuptiis Philologiae et Mercurii* ('The Marriage of Philology and Mercury'), which Cassiodorus says is not part of his collection (*Inst.* 2.3.20), is a handbook on the seven liberal arts. There is an English translation of this work by W.H. Stahl and R. Johnson, with E.L. Burge, New York: Columbia University Press, 1977.

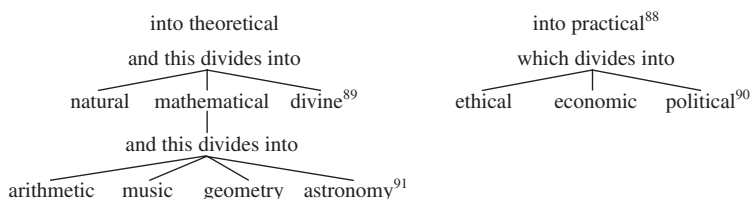
81 *disciplina enim dicta est, quia discitur plena*. Another of Cassiodorus's etymologies. Cf. Augustine, *Soliloq.* 2.1.20: *disciplina... a discendo dicta est*. Maltby, 190.

82 I. Hadot, 194, note 20, suggests that the Latin text of the last clause of this sentence, *quoniam incommutabilis illis semper regula veritatis obsequitur*, is corrupt. She notes that the reference of *illis*, which is not well attested in the manuscript tradition, is unclear. The archetype, she offers, had INCOMMUTABILISEMPER and the later copyists misunderstood the function of the letters ILIS. Her revision presents a text that reads: *quoniam incommutabili semper regula <e> veritatis obsequitur*, 'since it (i.e., the discipline) always serves the unchangeable rule of truth'.

2. Varro in his nine books of *Disciplines*⁸³ defined dialectic and rhetoric by the following simile: ‘Dialectic and rhetoric are like the clenched fist and open palm in a man’s hand’,⁸⁴ <the former encloses the proofs of argumentation briefly, the latter, in full flow of words, traverses through the fields of eloquence;>⁸⁵ the former narrows its words, the latter expands them. Dialectic is indeed a keener instrument for discussing issues; rhetoric, more eloquent in purposeful teaching. The former often visits in the schools, the latter always goes out to the law courts and assemblies. The former has need of a few devotees, the latter often seeks crowds of people.

3. But before we speak of syllogisms, which display all the usefulness and excellence of dialectic, we must discuss briefly its starting points, the basics, so to speak, that the direction of our discussion will take the same course as that followed by our predecessors. Now it is the custom of teachers of philosophy, before they begin to comment on the *Isagoge*,⁸⁶ to touch briefly on the branches of philosophy. We will also maintain these divisions and believe that they should be mentioned at this point.

4. Philosophy is divided⁸⁷



83 See above, n. 79.

84. Quintilian 2.20.7 indicates that this pithy observation goes back to Zeno (frg. 75, *Stoicorum veterum fragmenta*, 1.21 von Arnim): *itaque cum duo sint genera orationis, altera perpetua, quae rhetorice dicitur, altera concisa, quae dialectice, quas quidem Zeno adeo coniunxit, ut hanc compressae in pugnum manus, illam explicatae diceret similem...* (‘Consequently, since there are two kinds of speech, the continuous that is called rhetoric, and the concise that is called dialectic, the relation between which was regarded by Zeno as being so intimate that he compared the latter to the closed fist, the former to the open hand...’ [trans. Butler, 1.353 LCL]).

85. The words in angular brackets are preserved in α and are inserted in the text by Mynors.

86. This brief treatise by Porphyry is an elementary introduction to Aristotle’s *Categories* (CAG 4.1.1–22 Busse). It was translated into Latin by, among others, Boethius (c.480–c.524 AD), whose translation appears in the same volume (CAG 4.1.25–51).

87. Δ adds: ‘Philosophy is divided according to Aristotle, but <the divisions> do not agree with Plato: ΘΕΟΡΗΤΙΚΗ – ΠΡΑΚΤΙΚΗ.’

88. Ammonius, *In Porphyrii Isagogen Prooemium* (CAG 4.3) 11.21–22 Busse: εἰκότως οὖν ἡ φιλοσοφία εἰς δύο διακεῖται, εἷς τε θεωρητικὸν καὶ πρακτικόν.

5. Philosophy is the demonstrable (insofar as it is humanly possible) knowledge of divine and human matters.⁹² Alternatively, philosophy is the art of arts and discipline of disciplines.⁹³ Or again, philosophy is a preparation for dying,⁹⁴ which is better fitted to Christians who trample down the lusts of this world and live a life of principle in a likeness of the homeland to come, as the Apostle says: 'For though we walk in the flesh, we do not make war according to the flesh' <II Cor. 10:3>; and elsewhere, 'Our city is in heaven' <Phil. 3:20>.⁹⁵

6. Theoretical philosophy is that by which we go beyond the visible world to contemplate something of the divine and heavenly, and which we see only with the mind, since we have gone beyond corporeal sight. Natural philosophy is the investigation of the nature of each thing. Without the cooperation of nature [against the wishes of nature] nothing comes into being, but each thing is destined to those uses for which the creator limited [produced] it, unless perhaps by God's will some miracle is shown to occur. The science that deals with quantity in the abstract is called mathematical. An abstract quantity is that which we deal with by calculation alone by mentally separating these quantities from matter or other accidents, for instance, equals, unequals, and other things of this sort. Philosophy is called divine when we discuss the ineffable nature of God or spiritual creations partaking in some degree of a most profound distinguishing quality.

89 Ammonius, *In Porphyrii Isagogen Prooemium* (CAG 4.3) 11.22–23 Busse: πάλιν τὸ θεωρητικὸν διαίρεται εἰς θεολογικὸν μαθηματικὸν καὶ φυσιολογικόν.

90 Ammonius, *In Porphyrii Isagogen Prooemium* (CAG 4.3) 15.2–3 Busse: διαίρεται τοῖνυν τὸ πρακτικὸν εἰς τε τὸ ἠθικὸν καὶ οἰκονομικὸν καὶ πολιτικόν.

91 Ammonius, *In Porphyrii Isagogen Prooemium* (CAG 4.3) 13.10–11 Busse: τὸ δὲ μαθηματικὸν διαίρεται εἰς τέσσαρα, εἰς γεωμετρίαν καὶ ἀστρονομίαν καὶ μουσικὴν καὶ ἀριθμητικὴν. Δ has a confused table, for which see the third apparatus in Mynors, 110 (to line 14).

92 Ammonius, *In Porphyrii Isagogen Prooemium* (CAG 4.3) 3.1–2 Busse: τινὲς δὲ ὀρίζονται οὕτως· φιλοσοφία ἐστὶ θεῶν τε καὶ ἀνθρωπίνων πραγμάτων γνῶσις.

93 Macrobius, *Saturnalia* 7.15.14: ...philosophiam artem esse artium et disciplinarum... Cf. Ammonius, *In Porphyrii Isagogen Prooemium* (CAG 4.3) 6.27 Busse: φιλοσοφία ἐστὶ τέχνη τεχνῶν καὶ ἐπιστήμη ἐπιστημῶν.

94 Cicero, *Tusc. Disp.* 1.30.74: *Tota enim philosophorum vita... commentatio mortis est.* Cf. Ammonius, *In Porphyrii Isagogen Prooemium* (CAG 4.3) 4.15–16 Busse: Ἔστι δὲ καὶ ἄλλος ὁρισμὸς ἐκ τοῦ τέλους ὁ λέγων φιλοσοφία ἐστὶ μελέτη θανάτου.

95 Δ adds: 'philosophy is to be like God insofar as it is possible for a human being'. Cf. Ammonius, *In Porphyrii Isagogen Prooemium* (CAG 4.3) 3.7–9 Busse: ἔστι δὲ καὶ τοιοῦτος ὁρισμὸς ἀπὸ τοῦ τέλους ὁ λέγων φιλοσοφία ἐστὶ ὁμοίωσις θεῷ κατὰ τὸ δυνατόν ἀνθρώπῳ.

Arithmetic is the study of quantity that can be counted in itself. Music is the study that discusses numbers that have a relationship to those things that are found in sounds. Geometry is the study of stationary magnitudes and shapes. Astronomy is the study of the movements of the stars in heaven. It considers and investigates by reason all configurations and movements of the stars in relation to one another and to the earth.

7. Practical philosophy attempts to explain matters under consideration on the basis of their effects. Ethical philosophy is that through which a proper way of living is sought and principles aiming at virtue are prepared. Economic philosophy is the theory of the wisely ordered disposition of private affairs. Political philosophy is the theory for the effective governance of the entire state.

8. Now that we have dealt with the divisions in which everything is included in general terms and definitions of philosophy, let us turn to Porphyry's book entitled the *Isagoge*. The *Isagoge* of Porphyry deals with five predictables: genus, species, differentiating characteristic, property, and accident.⁹⁶ Genus relates to species in that it predicates of the things different in species which are in it, what each is, for example, animal;⁹⁷ for the genus 'animal' is predicated of, and signified by individual species, i.e., of man, ox, horse. Species is what is predicated in respect of essence of several things differing in number. Man is predicated of Socrates, Plato, <and> Cicero.⁹⁸ A differentiating characteristic is predicated in respect of quality of several objects differing in species, as, for example, rational and mortal are predicated as qualities of man.⁹⁹ A property is that in respect of which each species or person is marked by definite addition and in respect of which it is separated from every class (*communio*), as laughter in a man and neighing in a horse. Accident is what is added or subtracted without change in the subject¹⁰⁰ or those things so added that are not subtracted at all. Anyone who wants to know more of these matters should read the introductory

96 Δ adds: ΓΕΝΟΣ, ΕΙΔΟΣ, ΔΦΟΡΑ, ΙΔΙΟΝ, ΣΥΜΒΕΒΗΚΟΣ.

97 Boethius, *In Isagogen Porphyrii Commenta* (CSEL 48) 180.1–3 Brandt: *genus esse dicentes quod de pluribus et differentibus specie in eo quod quid sit praedicatur, ut animal.*

98 Boethius, *In Isagogen Porphyrii Commenta* (CSEL 48) 205.4–6 Brandt: *species est quod de pluribus numero differentibus in eo quod quid sit praedicatur, ut homo; praedicatur enim de Cicerone ac Demosthene et ceteris.*

99 Boethius, *In Isagogen Porphyrii Commenta* (CSEL 48) 265.13–17 Brandt: *differentia est quod de pluribus et differentibus specie in eo quod quale sit praedicatur; rationale enim et mortale de homine praedicatum in eo quod quale quiddam est homo dicitur.*

100 Boethius, *In Isagogen Porphyrii Commenta* (CSEL 48) 280.14–15 Brandt: *Accidens uero est quod adest et abest praeter subiecti corruptionem.*

work of Porphyry. Although he states that he is writing to make another's work useful, he nevertheless gained praise for himself for having fashioned such statements.

9. The categories or predicates of Aristotle follow, in which all discourse is wondrously contained in various meanings. Its instruments or terms are three in number. The terms or instruments of categories or predication are three: equivocal, univocal, denominative.¹⁰¹ Equivocal are defined as those that only have a common name, but in the name have a different kind of substance. For example, both an actual man and a man in a painting are animal.¹⁰² Univocal are defined as those that have a common name and do not differ in the name but have the same principle of substance; e.g., both a man and an ox are animal.¹⁰³ Denominative, i.e., derivative, is whatever gets an appellation in a name; it differs from that name only in suffixes, for example grammarian from grammar and brave from bravery.¹⁰⁴

10. The categories or predication of Aristotle are ten in number: substance, quantity, relation, quality, action, emotion/passion, place, time, position, state.¹⁰⁵ Substance is that which is noted properly and primarily and particularly, which is neither predicated of a subject nor present in a subject, as some particular man or some particular horse.¹⁰⁶ Second substances are defined as those species in which what are called first substances are present and included,¹⁰⁷ as Cicero is in the species of man. Quantity is of two sorts: (1) it is discrete and has separate parts that do not share some common end, for example number and uttered speech; (2) it is continuous, and has parts

101 Δ adds: ΟΜΩΝΥΜΑ ΣΥΝΟΝΥΜΑ ΠΑΡΩΝΥΜΑ.

102 Boethius, *Translatio Categoriae* (Aristoteles Latinus 1.1–5) 5.3–5 Minio-Paluello: *Aequivoca dicuntur quorum nomen solum commune est, secundum nomen vero substantiae ratio diversa, ut animal homo et quod pingitur.*

103 Boethius, *Translatio Categoriae* (Aristoteles Latinus 1.1–5) 5.9–11 Minio-Paluello: *Univoca vero dicuntur quorum et nomen commune est et secundum nomen eadem substantiae ratio, ut animal homo atque bos.*

104 Boethius, *Translatio Categoriae* (Aristoteles Latinus 1.1–5) 5.15–17 Minio-Paluello: *Denominativa vero dicuntur quaecumque ab aliquo, solo differentia casu, secundum nomen habent appellationem, ut a grammatica grammaticus et a fortitudine fortis.* Δ adds: ΑΝΔΡΙΑΣ ΑΝΔΡΙΟΣ.

105 Δ adds, with misspellings: ΟΥΣΙΑ, ΠΟΣΟΤΗΣ, ΠΡΟΣΤΙ, ΠΟΙΟΤΗΣ, ΠΟΙΕΙΝ, ΠΑΣΧΕΙΝ, ΚΕΙΣΘΑΙ, ΠΟΤΕ, ΠΟΥ, ΕΧΕΙΝ.

106 Boethius, *Translatio Categoriae* (Aristoteles Latinus 1.1–5) 7.10–12 Minio-Paluello: *Substantia autem est, quae proprie et principaliter et maxime dicitur, quae neque de subiecto praedicatur neque in subiecto est, ut aliqui homo vel aliqui equus.*

107 Boethius, *Translatio Categoriae* (Aristoteles Latinus 1.1–5) 7.13–14 Minio-Paluello: *Secundae substantiae dicuntur, in quibus speciebus illae quae principaliter substantia dicuntur insunt.*

that are joined to one another for some common end, such as line, surface, body, place, <motion,> time.¹⁰⁸ Relation defines one thing in relation to another, like greater, double, condition, placement, knowledge, sense, location.¹⁰⁹ Quality is that by which we are said to be of some sort,¹¹⁰ as good, bad. Action is, e.g., cutting or burning, i.e., doing something. Passion is, e.g., being cut or being burned.¹¹¹ Place is, e.g., one stands, sits, lies. Time is <as> yesterday or tomorrow. Position is as in Asia, in Europe, in Libya. State is, e.g., to have shoes on or to have armour on.¹¹² We must read this work of Aristotle carefully since, as has been said, whatever men speak of is inevitably found among these ten predications. It is also useful for understanding books that deal either with rhetoric or dialectic.

11. The next book to be considered is the *Perihermenias*. It is a very subtle and careful study, filled with different forms and repetitions. They say of it that 'Aristotle, when he was composing the *Perihermenias*, dipped his pen in his mind.'¹¹³ In the *Perihermenias*, i.e., *On Interpretation*, the philosopher dealt with the following: noun, verb, sentence, declaration, affirmation, denial, contradiction. A noun is a sound that derives significance from

108 Boethius, *Translatio Categoriae* (Aristoteles Latinus 1.1–5) 13.20–25 Minio-Paluello: *Quantitatis aliud est continuum, aliud disgregatum atque discretum; et aliud quidem ex habentibus positionem ad se invicem suis partibus constat, aliud vero ex non habentibus positionem. Est autem discreta quantitas ut numerus et oratio, continua vero ut linea, superficies, corpus, praeter haec vero tempus et locus.*

109 Boethius, *Translatio Categoriae* (Aristoteles Latinus 1.1–5) 18.4–10 Minio-Paluello: *Ad aliquid vero talia dicuntur quaecumque hoc ipsum quod sunt aliorum dicuntur, vel quomodolibet aliter ad aliud, ut maius hoc ipsum quod est ad aliud dicitur (aliquo enim maius dicitur), et duplex ad aliud dicitur hoc ipsum quod est (alicuius enim duplex dicitur), similiter autem et quaecumque alia talia sunt. At vero sunt etiam et haec ad aliquid, ut habitus, affectio, scientia, sensus, positio.*

110 Boethius, *Translatio Categoriae* (Aristoteles Latinus 1.1–5) 23.22–23 Minio-Paluello: *Qualitatem vero dico secundum quam quales quidam dicimur.*

111 Boethius, *Translatio Categoriae* (Aristoteles Latinus 1.1–5) 30.12–15 Minio-Paluello: *Suscipit autem et facere et pati contrarietatem et magis et minus; calefacere enim et frigidum facere contraria sunt, et calefieri et frigidum fieri.*

112 Boethius, *Translatio Categoriae* (Aristoteles Latinus 1.1–5) 30.19–24 Minio-Paluello: *dictum est autem et de situ in relativis, quoniam denominative a positionibus dicitur. De reliquis vero, id est quando et ubi et habere, propterea quod manifesta sunt, nihil de his ultra dicitur quam quod in principio dictum est, quod habere significat calciatum esse vel armatum, ubi vero in Lycio, vel alia quaecumque de his dicta sunt.*

113 Courcelle (*Late Latin Writers*, 346, note 38) suggests that Cassiodorus took this statement from an unknown Greek commentator. It appears, in a slightly different version in the Suda 3930, s.v. Ἀριστοτέλης: Ἀριστοτέλης τῆς φύσεως γραμματεὺς ἦν, τὸν πάλαμον ἀποβέχων εἰς νοῦν.

convention, without time reference, whose parts have no significance separately,¹¹⁴ e.g., Socrates. A verb is that which marks the time, of which a part signifies nothing more, and is always the mark of those things that are said of another,¹¹⁵ e.g., ‘<s/he> thinks,’ ‘<s/he> argues’. A sentence is a significant portion of speech whose parts are separately significant,¹¹⁶ e.g., ‘Socrates argues’. An assertion is a significant portion of speech [about] something that is or is not,¹¹⁷ as ‘Socrates exists’, ‘Socrates does not exist’. An affirmation is an assertion of something about something, as ‘Socrates exists’; a denial is <a negative assertion> of something about something,¹¹⁸ as ‘Socrates does not exist’. A contradiction is the opposing of affirmation and denial,¹¹⁹ as ‘Socrates argues, Socrates does not argue’. All these matters are treated in great detail by division and subdivision in the book. It should suffice to mention briefly [those things] the definitions of these matters, since the book itself presents a suitable explanation. Furthermore a commentary on it in six books by the patrician Boethius has been left to you among the other books.¹²⁰

12. Now we come to the types and figures of syllogisms in which the intellect of noble philosophers is continuously trained. The figures of the categorical, i.e., predicative, syllogisms are three: in the first figure there are nine moods, in the second figure, four moods, in the third <figure>, six.¹²¹

114 Boethius, *Commentarius in Librum Aristoteles ΠΕΡΙ ΕΡΜΗΝΕΙΑΣ*, editio secunda, 2 (52.28–30 Meiser): *Nomen ergo est vox significativa secundum placitum sine tempore, cuius nulla pars est significativa separata.*

115 Boethius, *Commentarius in Librum Aristoteles ΠΕΡΙ ΕΡΜΗΝΕΙΑΣ*, editio secunda, 3 (65.29–66.2 Meiser): *Verbum autem est quod consignificat tempus, cuius pars nihil extra significat, et est semper eorum quae de altero dicuntur nota.*

116 Boethius, *Commentarius in Librum Aristoteles ΠΕΡΙ ΕΡΜΗΝΕΙΑΣ*, editio secunda, 4 (80.18–20 Meiser): *Oratio autem est vox significativa, cuius partium aliquid significativum est separatum.*

117 Boethius, *Commentarius in Librum Aristoteles ΠΕΡΙ ΕΡΜΗΝΕΙΑΣ*, editio secunda, 5 (118.17–18 Meiser): *Est autem simplex enuntiatio vox significativa de eo quod est aliquid vel non est.*

118 Boethius, *Commentarius in Librum Aristoteles ΠΕΡΙ ΕΡΜΗΝΕΙΑΣ*, editio secunda, 6 (118.20–22 Meiser): *Adfirmatio vero est enuntiatio alicuius de aliquo, negatio vero enuntiatio alicuius ab aliquo.*

119 Boethius, *Commentarius in Librum Aristoteles ΠΕΡΙ ΕΡΜΗΝΕΙΑΣ*, editio secunda, 6 (126.21–23 Meiser): *et sit hoc contradictio, adfirmatio et negatio oppositae.*

120 This is a specific reference to the second edition of the commentary by Boethius; the first edition has only two books.

121 Apuleius, *Peri Hermenias* 185.24–186.2 Thomas: *Nunc tradendum est, quibus modis ... fiant intra certum numerum praedicativi generis verae conclusiones. quippe in prima*

The nine moods of the first figure are: (1) that conclusion which infers a universal affirmative from a universal affirmative directly as: ‘Everything just is honourable; everything honourable is good; therefore, everything just is good’; (2) that which concludes a negative universal from an affirmative and a negative universal: ‘Everything just is honourable; nothing honourable is base; therefore, nothing just is base’; (3) that which concludes a particular affirmation from a particular and a universal affirmation: ‘Something just is honourable; everything honourable is useful; therefore, something just is useful’; (4) that which concludes a particular negation from a particular affirmation and a universal negation <as>: ‘Something just is honourable; nothing honourable is base; therefore, something just is not base’; (5) that which concludes from universal affirmations a particular affirmation by conversion: ‘Everything just is honourable; everything honourable is good; therefore, something good is just’; (6) that which concludes from a universal affirmation and a universal negation a universal negation by conversion: ‘Everything just is honourable; nothing honourable is base; therefore, nothing base is just’; (7) that which concludes from {a particular and} a universal affirmation a particular affirmation by conversion: ‘Something just is honourable; everything honourable is useful; therefore, something useful is just’; (8) that which concludes from a negative and affirmative universal a particular negation by conversion: ‘Nothing base is honourable; everything honourable is just; therefore, something just is not base’; (9) that which concludes from a universal negation <and a particular affirmation> a particular negation by conversion: ‘Nothing base is honourable; something honourable is just; therefore, something just is not base’.¹²²

The four moods of the second figure are: (1) that which concludes a universal negation directly from a universal affirmation and universal negation: ‘Everything just is honourable; nothing base is honourable; therefore, nothing base is just [just is base]’; (2) that which concludes a universal negation directly from a universal negation and a universal affirmation: ‘Nothing base is honourable; everything just is honourable; therefore, nothing base is just’; (3) that which concludes a particular negation directly from a particular affirmation and a universal negation: ‘Something just is honourable; nothing base is honourable; therefore, something just is not

formula novem soli moduli... ; in secunda quattuor moduli... ; in tertia sex moduli... . Δ adds: ΣΧΗΜΑ ΠΡΩΤΟ ΕΧΕΙ ΤΡΟΠΟΥΣ ΕΝΕΑ – ΣΧΗΜΑ Β' ΕΧΕΙ ΤΡΟΠΟΥΣ Δ' – ΣΧΗΜΑ Γ' ΕΧΕΙ ΤΡΟΠΟΥΣ ΕΞ Η ΕΝΤΑ. Clearly some of the Greek here is corrupt.

¹²² The nine moods of the first figure are taken from Apuleius, *Peri Hermenias* 9 (186.11–187.27 Thomas).

base'; (4) that which concludes a particular negation directly from a particular negation and a universal affirmation: 'Something just is not base; everything evil is base; therefore, something just is not evil'.¹²³

The six moods of the third figure are: (1) that which concludes from universal affirmations a particular affirmation both directly and by conversion: 'Everything just is honourable; {everything honourable is just;} everything just is good; therefore, something honourable is good and something good is honourable'; (2) that which concludes from a particular and a universal affirmation a particular affirmation directly: 'Something just is honourable; everything just is good; therefore, something honourable is good'; (3) that which concludes a particular affirmation directly from a universal and a particular affirmation: 'Everything just is honourable; something just is good; therefore, something honourable is good'; (4) that which concludes a particular negation directly from a universal affirmation and a universal negation: 'Everything just is honourable; nothing just is evil; therefore, something honourable is not evil'; (5) that which concludes a particular negation directly from a particular affirmation and a universal negation: 'Something just is honourable; {nothing just is evil;} therefore, something honourable is not evil'; (6) that which concludes a particular negation directly from a universal affirmation and a particular negation: 'Everything just is honourable; something just is not evil; therefore, something honourable is not evil'.¹²⁴

Whoever wants to know fully these figures of the categorical syllogism should read the book of Apuleius entitled *Perihermenias* where he will discover a more subtle treatment.¹²⁵ Let us not be overcome with boredom because of the repetition of words, for once we distinguish and meditate on them with the Lord's aid they bring us on the broad path of understanding. Now in running order let us take up the hypothetical syllogisms.

13. There are seven moods of the hypothetical syllogism that come about as the result of some set of contingencies.¹²⁶

¹²³ The four moods of the second figure are taken from Apuleius, *Peri Hermenias* 10 (188.12–189.16 Thomas).

¹²⁴ The six moods of the third figure are taken from Apuleius, *Peri Hermenias* 11 (189.19–190.16 Thomas).

¹²⁵ This work has in the past been considered as a doubtful work of Apuleius, but modern opinion seems to hold that he was the author.

¹²⁶ The treatise *De syllogismis hypotheticis* of Marius Victorinus is not extant. Parts of it can be reconstructed from this section of Cassiodorus, *Institutiones*, and Martianus Capella, *De nuptiis* 4.414.422. See P. Hadot, 143–61 and his Appendix II, 323–27. The treatise corresponded to Cicero, *Topica* 12.53–14.57 (Herzog–Schmidt, 349). Cassiodorus also refers to this treatise of Victorinus in the *Exp.Ps.* 7.137–42: *Si quis autem, siue de schematibus, siue de modis*

1. If it is day, it is light; it is day; therefore it is light.
2. If it is day, it is light; it is not light; therefore it is not day.
3. It is not both day and without light; it is day; therefore it is light.
4. It is either day or night; it is day; {therefore it is not night.}
5. It is either day or night; it is not night; therefore it is day.
6. It is not both day and night;¹²⁷ it is day; therefore it is not night.
7. It is not both day and night; it is not night; therefore it is day.

If anyone wishes to know more about the moods of the hypothetical syllogism, he should read the book of Marius Victorinus called *On the Hypothetical Syllogism*. You should also know that Tullius Marcellus of Carthage dealt with categorical and hypothetical syllogisms, a matter discussed broadly by various philosophers, carefully [briefly] and subtly in seven books. In the first book he discussed the rule, as he himself says, of the dialectical art of syllogisms. He explained briefly in the second and third books what Aristotle published [discussed] on the categorical syllogism in many books; in his fourth and fifth books he brings together what the Stoics had discussed in numerous volumes on the hypothetical syllogisms; in the sixth book he discussed mixed [mystical *sic*] syllogisms, in the seventh, composite syllogisms. I have left this book for you to read.¹²⁸

14. Let us proceed from this to the most pleasant types of definitions that are so prominent that they can be called the obvious manifestations [greatest glory] of statements and some distinguishing marks [bright lights] of speech. The definition of definition is a brief statement including in its own signification the nature of each thing separated from the general class. This is accomplished in many ways and by many rules. The divisions of definitions:¹²⁹

syllogismorum, siue quid sint simplices, siue compositi plenissime nosse desiderat, Aristotelem in graecis, Victorinum autem Marium lectitet in latinis et facile sibi quisque talia confirmat, quae nunc difficilia fortasse diiudicat ('[I]f anyone wishes to attain fuller knowledge of figures, <of the moods of syllogisms, in what way they are simple, and in what way compound>, he should read Aristotle so far as the Greeks are concerned and Marius Victorinus of the Latin writers. In this way he can easily establish on his own behalf what he now perhaps considers to be difficult' [trans. Walsh, 1.102–03; Walsh omits several clauses, and his footnote 12 is incorrect]). This passage is a bibliographic addition to the *Expositio* made at Vivarium after the composition of *Institutiones* 2. Pace P. Hadot (143, note 2), in this I agree with Cappuyns, 1370, though the reference is not to a translation of the *Categories* of Aristotle by Victorinus.

127 The reading of the MSS is *et non lucet*; as P. Hadot (148, note 15) points out, this cannot be correct in terms of the logical progression. The proper reading is *et nox*, which is translated here.

128 Tullius Marcellus of Carthage is not mentioned by any other ancient source. The work is no longer extant. *PLRE* 2.713: Tullius Marcellus 6, gives his date as s. IV/VI.

129 Δ omits this clause, and adds the Greek terms for the definitions.

usiodes, i.e., essential; *ennoematice*, i.e., notional; *poeodes*, i.e., qualitative; *<h>ypographice*, i.e., descriptive; *cata antilexin*, i.e., substitutional; *cata diaphoran*, i.e., differential; *cata metaphoran*, i.e., by metaphor; *cat' apheresin tu enantiu*, i.e., by negation of the contrary; *cata typosin*, i.e., by a particular image; *os typos*, i.e., likeness; *cata ellipes olocleru omogenus*, i.e., by lack of fullness of the same genus; *cata epenon*, i.e., by praise; *cata analogian*, i.e., proportional; *cata to <pros ti>*, i.e., relational; *cata etiologian*, i.e., causal.¹³⁰

Definitions:

1. Greek *usiodes* (Latin, essential) that is truly and properly definition, as 'Man is a mortal rational animal capable of understanding and learning.' This definition passing down through species and differentia arrives at what is essential and delineates most fully what man is.¹³¹
2. Greek *ennoematice* (inferential) that in Latin we can call notional [notion], using a common, not a proper, term. This is always fashioned in the following way: 'Man is a creature that is superior to other animals in the grasp and exercise of reason'; it does not tell what a man is, but what he does, as if a sign had been invoked to lead to knowledge.¹³² In this definition and in the rest, the notion of the thing presented is not an essential one, as is stated in that first definition. Because the first kind of definition is essential, it holds first place among all definitions.
3. Greek *poeotes* (Latin, qualitative). This definition, by telling what the quality is, clearly shows what the thing is, e.g., 'A man is one who has a

¹³⁰ Marius Victorinus, *De definitionibus* (P. Hadot, 346.18–347.5). Hadot has reprinted the edition of this work by T. Stangl, *Tulliana et Mario-Victoriniana*, Munich: Max Wild'sche Buchdruckerei, 1888 ['Program des K. Luitpold-Gymnasiums in München für das Studienjahr 1887/88'].

¹³¹ Marius Victorinus, *De definitionibus* (P. Hadot, 337.14–23): ... *hic docebimus nullum esse definitionem certam integram approbandam nisi eam quam dicunt philosophi substantialem, Graece οὐσιώδης appellatur... Ad cognitionem interim illud accedat: quotiens de aliquo quaeritur quid sit, tunc posse esse certam ac substantialem definitionem, quotiens eius rei de qua quaeritur, uti diximus, genus ponimus et sic cetera per differentias in oratione subiungimus... Quaeritur homo quid sit...*

¹³² Marius Victorinus, *De definitionibus* (P. Hadot, 347.9–19): *Secunda est quae dicitur ἐννοηματική, quam notionem communi, non proprio nomine possumus dicere. In omnibus enim reliquis definitionibus notio rei profertur, non substantia explicatione declaratur; verum haec quae secunda est hoc modo semper efficitur, cum, proposito eo quod definiendum est neque dicto eius genere, verbis in rei sensum ducentibus audientem quid illud sit de quo quaeritur explicatur. Estque huic paene familiare res positae per subiecta nomina definire, ut si dicam 'homo est quod rationali conceptione et exercitio praeest animalibus cunctis': hic non quidem ipsum quod sit dixi, sed, dicendo quid agat, quasi quodam signo in notitiam devocavi. Cf. Exp.Ps. 1.77–78, 5.161–62, 39.77–78, 40.34–36, 145.116–18.*

strong mind, an ability in arts, and by knowledge of matters chooses what he ought to do or by censure rejects what is not beneficial.' A man is described and defined by these qualities.¹³³

4. *hypographice* (descriptive). This type, by the addition of circumlocutions concerning words and deeds, declares what a thing is by description. If we want to define 'luxurious', we say: 'Luxurious means seeking an unessential, expensive, and burdensome way of life, overabundant in delights [in regard to delights], inclined to lust.' This type of definition is more suited to orators than dialecticians because of its breadth. This likeness is set down [This is set down] in matters good and evil.¹³⁴

5. *cata antilexin* (substitutional). This definition defines the word whose meaning is sought, by another simple and particular word. In some degree it states by one word the meaning set down in another, {as} 'to grow quiet is to be silent'. Likewise when we say a 'boundary' is an 'end' or define 'destroyed' as 'pillaged'.¹³⁵

6. *cata diaphoran* (differential). When the difference between a king and a tyrant is in question, the assertion of difference defines each of them: 'A king is moderate and temperate, a tyrant wicked and cruel.'¹³⁶

7. *cata metaphoran* (by metaphor, <i.e., one thing described in terms of another>). As Cicero says in the *Topics*, 'The shore is where the wave plays itself out.' This can be treated in several ways; to move, as in 'The head is the

133 Marius Victorinus, *De definitionibus* (P. Hadot 348.13–349.1): *Tertia definitionis species est quae ποιότης dicitur: haec, dicendo quid quale sit, id quod sit ostendit... Homo est... qui ingenio valet, artibus pollet, et cognitione rerum aut quod agere debeat deligit aut animadversione quod inutile sit contemnit... His qualitatibus expressus est homo. Cf. Exp.Ps. 23.154–55, 32.115–17, 118.88–90.*

134 Cf. Marius Victorinus, *De definitionibus* (P. Hadot, 349.19–350.21). Cf. *Exp.Ps.* 79.229–31.

135. Marius Victorinus, *De definitionibus* (P. Hadot, 350.22–351.5): *Quinta species definitionis est quam κατ' ἀντίλεξιν diximus, Latine ad verbum possumus dicere. Haec vocem illam de cuius re quaeritur alio sermone designat, uno ac singulari, et quodammodo, quid illud sit uno verbo positum, uno verbo alio declarat, ut 'conticescere' est 'tacere', ... item cum 'terminum' dicimus 'finem' aut 'populatas' interpretamur esse 'vastatas'. Cf. Exp.Ps. 16.242–43, 32.106–08, 45.27–28, 50.582–84, 67.304–05, 83.132–34, 85.128–29, 118.2387–89, 138.466–68, 139.160–61, 144.102–03. P. Hadot (365) asks, with justified annoyance, why the editor of the text in CCSL consistently goes against the manuscript evidence *cata antilexin* (when he takes the trouble to cite it), and reads κατὰ τὴν λέξιν instead. Walsh throughout his translation repeats the error of the CCSL edition, though he knows that the definitions come from Marius Victorinus.*

136 Marius Victorinus, *De definitionibus* (P. Hadot, 351.12–15, 352.1–2): *Sexta κατὰ διαφοράν species definitionis est. Hanc nos per differentiam dicimus,... Vt cum quaeritur 'quid inter regem sit et tyrannum', adiecta differentia quid uterque sit definitur..., ut 'rex est modestus et temperans, tyrannus vero crudelis'.*

citadel of the body'; for blame, 'Riches: a deep purse for a brief life'; for praise, 'Youth is the flower of life.'¹³⁷

8. *cata apheresin tou enantiou* (by negation of the opposite of what is defined). 'The good is what is not evil; the just is what is not unjust' and the like; these are so naturally tied together that one gains a logical understanding for the one by grasping the other. We should, however, use this type of definition when the opposite is known, for no one proves the known from the unknown. Belonging to this type are these definitions: 'Substance is what is neither quality, quantity or other accidental.' God can be defined by this type of definition. For although we cannot grasp in any way what God is, the subtraction of all existing things (what the Greeks call *onta*) supplies a knowledge of God to us by cutting off and removing things known, as if we were to say: 'God is what is neither body nor any element nor soul'¹³⁸ nor mind nor sense nor intellect nor anything that can be grasped out of these.' By subtracting these and the like as well we can define what God is.¹³⁹

9. *cata typosin* (by some image). 'Aeneas is the son of Venus and Anchises.' This is always used for individual items that the Greeks call *atoma*; it also

137 Cicero, *Topica* 7.32: *Solebat igitur Aquilius collega et familiaris meus, cum de litoribus ageretur, quae omnia publica esse vultis, quaerentibus eis quod ad id pertinebat, quid esset litus, ita definire, qua fluctus eluderet; hoc est, quasi qui adulescentiam florem aetatis... velit definire; translatione enim utens discedebat a verbis propriis rerum ac suis.* ('A case in point is Aquilius, my colleague and intimate friend. When there was a discussion of shores, which you jurists claim are all public property, and those who were interested in the matter asked what a shore was, he was accustomed to define it as the place upon which the waves play. This is as if one should choose to define youth as the flower of a man's age...; for by using a metaphor he abandoned the language proper to the object and to his profession' [trans. Hubbell, 405–407 LCL]). Marius Victorinus, *De definitionibus* (P. Hadot, 352.7–14): *Septima est κατὰ μεταφοράν id est per translationem, ut Cicero in Topicis 'litus est qua fluctus eludit'... Haec varie tractari potest: modo enim... ut designet 'caput est arx corporis', ut vituperet 'divitiae sunt brevis vitae longum viaticum', ut laudet 'adulescentia est flos aetatis'.* Cf. *Exp.Ps.* 18.136–38.

138 The manuscripts here all read *animal*, which is surely incorrect. The text of Marius Victorinus, *De definitionibus* (P. Hadot, 354.22), has the correct reading, *anima*, which is what is translated here.

139 Marius Victorinus, *De definitionibus* (P. Hadot, 353.9–16, 354.13–24): *Octava species definitionis κατ' ἀφαίρεσιν τοῦ ἐναντίου id est per privantiam contrarii eius quod definitur, ut 'bonum est quod malum non est.' Hoc genere definitionis uti debemus, cum contrarium notum est... quod se ita naturaliter ligat, ut necessariam cognitionem sibi unius comprehensione conectat ... ut si quis id esse substantiam dicat quod neque qualitas neque quantitas neque aliqua accidentia sit... Quo genere definitionis deus definiri potest. Etenim cum quid sit deus nullo modo scire possimus, sublatio omnium existentium, quae Graeci ὄντα appellant, cognitionem dei nobis, circumcisa et ablata notarum rerum cognitione, supponet: 'deus est neque corpus neque ullum elementum neque anima neque mens neque sensus neque intellectus neque aliquid quod ex his capi potest.' His talibus sublati quid sit deus poterit definiri.* Cf. *Exp.Ps.* 1.71–72, 31.50–52, 85.165–67, 93.275–77.

appears in the following kind of statement in which one is ashamed or afraid to name something, as Cicero's 'When those cutthroats obviously are describing me.'¹⁴⁰

10. *os typos* (Latin, 'like' 'for example'). If one were to ask what an 'animal' is and the answer would be 'man'. It is clearly not stated that man is the only animal, since there are countless others, but when 'man' is stated, it defines 'animal' by the example of 'man', although many other creatures are set down under this term. The example quoted stated the matter under discussion, as a definition by its nature must.¹⁴¹

11. *cata ellipes oloclerou homogenus* (by what is lacking of fullness of the same genus). If one asks what a 'quarter' ['third'] is, he receives the reply, 'That which lacks three-quarters of being a whole *as*.'¹⁴²

12. *cata epaenon* (by praise). Cicero in the speech *For Cluentius* says, 'The law is the mind and soul and counsel and decision of the state', and elsewhere, 'Peace is quiet liberty.' It appears also in statements of blame that the Greeks call *psogon*, 'Slavery is the worst of all evils, to be driven off not only by war but also by death.'¹⁴³

13. *cata analogian* (proportional). This type occurs when a lesser thing is defined with a term for the greater thing. 'Man is a lesser world.' Cicero uses

140 Marius Victorinus, *De definitionibus* (P. Hadot, 355.16–22): *Nona species definitionis est καὶ ὑποτύπωσις, id est per quandam imaginationem, ut 'Aeneas est filius Veneris et Anchisae'. Haec semper in individuīs versatur, quae Graeci ἄτομα vocant... Item subvenit in eo genere dictionis ubi aliquem pudor aut metus est nominare: 'Me videlicet' inquit Tullius 'sicarii illi describebant'. Cicero, *Pro Milone* 17.47: *Me videlicet latronem ac sicarium abiecti homines et perditī describebant*. It is not clear why Victorinus adjusted the text here; Jones's note (171, note 60) wondering why Cassiodorus changed the text of Cicero starts with the wrong assumption. Cf. *Exp.Ps.* 72.5–7.*

141 Marius Victorinus, *De definitionibus* (P. Hadot, 356.7–11): *Decima species est ὡς τύπος; hanc 'veluti' diximus, ut si quaeratur quid sit 'animal', respondeatur 'ut homo'... rem enim quaesitam subiunctum declarat exemplum, et hoc est proprium definitionis: quid sit illud quod quaeritur declarare*. Cf. *Exp.Ps.* 48.208–09. The CCSL edition incorrectly reads ὡς τύπος. Walsh's translation (1.475) repeats the error.

142 Marius Victorinus, *De definitionibus* (P. Hadot, 356.12–14): *Vndecima species definitionis est κατ' ἐλλειπὲς τοῦ πλήρους ὁμοίου γένους, id est per indigentiam plenī ex eodem genere, ut si quaeratur quid sit 'quadrans' respondeatur 'cui dodrans deest ut sit assis'*.

143 Marius Victorinus, *De definitionibus* (P. Hadot, 356.15–357.1, 357.11–15): *Duodecima species definitionis est κατ' ἑπαινον, id est per laudem, ut Tullius pro Cluentio: 'Lex est mens et animus et consilium et sententia civitatis' <Pro Cluentio 53.146: mens et animus et consilium et sententia civitatis posita est in legibus>... ut et per vituperationem... 'servitus est postremum malorum omnium non modo bello, sed morte etiam repellendum' <Phillipicae 2.44.113: servitus postremum malorum omnium, non modo bello sed morte etiam repellendum>... 'pax est tranquilla libertas' <Phillipicae 2.44.113: Pax est tranquilla libertas>. Cf. *Exp.Ps.* 17.338–39, 85.284–86, 88.127–28, 110.150–51, 135.168–69.*

this type of definition in ‘They say an edict is a law that is in force for a year.’¹⁴⁴

14. *cata ton pros ti* (relational). ‘A father is one who has a son, as a master is one who has a slave.’ Cicero says in the *Rhetorica*, ‘A genus is that which includes several species’; also, ‘A species is what is a sub-category of genus.’¹⁴⁵

15. *cata etiologion* (causational). ‘Day is the sun above the earth, night the sun beneath the earth.’¹⁴⁶ We should know that the above-mentioned types of definitions are properly tied to commonplaces, since they are placed within certain arguments and in some works are discussed among commonplaces. Now let us come to commonplaces [the art of the commonplace] that are the bases of discussions,¹⁴⁷ the sources of statements of opinion, {and} the starting points of modes of expression. [On these matters some few words must be said, so that we may recognize dialectical and rhetorical commonplaces. And first we must speak about the dialectical commonplaces. <There follow in α excerpts from Boethius, *De Differentiis Topicis*. The commonplaces found in α are in Mynor’s Appendix A>.]

{15. The division of commonplaces or of passages from which arguments are drawn:¹⁴⁸ some are inherent in the subject under discussion – some are said to be connected and are known to derive to some degree from other

144 Marius Victorinus, *De definitionibus* (P. Hadot, 358.1–8): *Tertia decima est species definitionis κατ’ ἀναλογίαν, id est iuxta rationem... Sed hoc contingit, cum maioris rei nomine res definitur inferior... Cicero hac usus est sic: ‘Qui plurimum tribuunt edicto, praetoris edictum legem annuam dicunt esse’ <In Verrem II.1.42.109>. Cf. Exp.Ps. 81.122–24.*

145 Marius Victorinus, *De definitionibus* (P. Hadot, 358.9–11): *Quarta decima species est definitionis κατὰ τὸ πρὸς τι, id est ad aliquid, ut ‘pater est cui est filius’. Cicero in Rhetoricis sic: ‘Genus est quod plures partes amplectitur’. item ‘Pars est quae subest generi’ <De inventione 1.28.42: Genus est quod partes aliquas amplectitur... Pars est quae subest generi>. Cf. Exp.Ps. 88.409–11.*

146 Marius Victorinus, *De definitionibus* (P. Hadot, 358.13–359.1): *Quinta decima species est definitionis αἰτιολογική, Latini secundum rei rationem vocant, ut ‘dies est sol supra terris’ ‘nox sol sub terris’.*

147. Exp.Ps. 144.342: *Topica sunt argumentorum sedes... Cf. Exp.Ps. Praefatio 15.65–68: Haec mundanarum artium periti, quos tamen multo posterius ab exordio diuinorum librorum exstitisse manifestum est, ad collectiones argumentorum, quae Graeci topica dicunt, et ad artem dialecticam et rhetoricam transtulerunt* (‘Those experienced in the secular arts, clearly living long after the time when the first words of the divine books were penned, transferred these techniques to the collections of arguments that the Greeks call topics, and to the arts of dialectic and rhetoric’ [trans. Walsh, 1.38]).

148 Sections 15 and 16 are taken from Book 4 of Marius Victorinus’s commentary on Cicero’s *Topica*, a work that is no longer extant. The work can be partially reconstructed out of the material from it cited by Cassiodorus and Martianus Capella (P. Hadot, 124–141, and his Appendix I, 314–21).

subjects – others are regarded as extrinsic.¹⁴⁹ Arguments that were in the subject under discussion – from the whole – from its parts – from meaning.¹⁵⁰

Argument from the whole: when a definition is attached to the matter in question,¹⁵¹ as Cicero says, ‘Glory is the praise of deeds well done and a reputation for great merits in the republic.’¹⁵²

An argument from parts: when the defendant either denies the deed or says it was justly done.

An argument from meaning: when some proof is drawn out from the meaning of a term,¹⁵³ as Cicero says, ‘I was looking for a consul, a consul, I say, whom I could not find in this eunuch.’¹⁵⁴

Arguments closely connected are those known to be drawn to some degree from other subjects: conjugate – from genus – from species – likeness, difference, contraries, adjuncts, antecedents, consequents, contradictions, cause, effect, comparison of greater to lesser, of lesser to greater, of equal to equal.¹⁵⁵

Argument from conjugates: when there is a change from noun to verb as Cicero says of Verres that ‘He swept (*everrisse*) the province’,¹⁵⁶ or noun from verb as ‘robber’ from ‘rob’ – a noun from noun, as Terence says, ‘The undertaking of madmen (*amentium*), not lovers (*amantium*)’ (*Andria* 218) – if the end of one term differs by being fashioned in another type of word formation.

Argument from genus: when a statement is drawn from the same genus,¹⁵⁷ as Virgil says, ‘A woman is always a shifty and changeable thing’ (*Aeneid* 4.569-570).

149 Cicero, *Topica* 2.8: *Sed ex his locis in quibus argumenta inclusa sunt, alii in eo ipso de quo agitur haerent, alii assumuntur extrinsecus.*

150 Cicero, *Topica* 2.8: *In ipso tum ex toto, tum ex partibus eius, tum ex nota...*

151 Cicero, *Topica* 2.9: *Sed ad id totum de quo disseritur tum definitio adhibetur, quae quasi involutum evolvit id de quo quaeritur.*

152 Cicero, *Pro Marcello* 8.26: *si quidem gloria est inlustris et pervagata magnorum vel in suos civis vel in patriam vel in omne genus hominum fama meritorum.* Cassiodorus does not offer an exact quotation.

153 Cicero, *Topica* 2.10: *tum notatio, cum ex verbi vi argumentum aliquod elicitur.* Cf. *Exp.Ps.* 34.339–40.

154 Again, Cassiodorus does not offer an exact quotation from Cicero, *In Pisonem* 8.19: *Consulem ego tum quaerebam, consulem inquam, non illum quidem quem in hoc maiali invenire non possem.*

155 Cf. *Exp.Ps.* 18.55 (*a pari*), 41.33–34 (*a minore ad maius*), 50.111 (*a parte maiori*), 81.125–126 (*a minore ad maius*), 101.278–279 (*ex maiore ad maius*).

156 *II Verr.* 2.7.19: *videte satisne paratus ex illo omine urbano ad everrendam provinciam venerit.*

157 Cf. *Exp.Ps.* 35.247–58.

Argument from species: when a particular statement gives credence to the general point, ‘Not thus did the Phrygian shepherd enter Lacedaemon’ (*Aeneid* 7.363).

Argument from likeness: when matters like others are brought out, as Virgil says, ‘Supply me with weapons: none shall fly from my right hand in vain against the Rutuli that were fixed in Greeks’ bodies on the plains of Troy’ (*Aeneid* 10.333-335).

Argument from differences: when some things are separated by differences, as Virgil says, ‘You do not see the horses of Diomedes and the chariot of Achilles’ (*Aeneid* 10.581, reading ‘Achillis’ for ‘Achilli’).

Argument from contraries: when contrary matters are contrasted to one another,¹⁵⁸ as Virgil says, ‘Is it right that ships made by mortal hands have immortality and Aeneas in his certainty wander through uncertain perils?’ (*Aeneid* 9.95-97)

Argument from consequents: when something inevitably follows the stated circumstance,¹⁵⁹ as Virgil says, ‘Not this violence in our hearts, not such great pride in the conquered’ (*Aeneid* 1.529).

Argument from antecedents: when something is proved from known events,¹⁶⁰ as Cicero says in *For Milo*, ‘Since he did not hesitate to disclose what he thought, can you doubt what he did?’ (*Pro Milone* 16.44).

Argument from contradictions: when the objection raised is removed by some contradiction, as Cicero says, ‘Therefore he who had wanted to kill you at home is not only freed from such danger, but marked out with highest honour.’¹⁶¹

Argument from like notions: when it is shown by a comparison what will take place from each event,¹⁶² ‘If they drive us out, they think nothing will be able to prevent them from putting all the West completely beneath their yoke’ (*Aeneid* 8.147-48).

Argument from causes: when each circumstance is treated according to common practice,¹⁶³ as Terence says, ‘I have long feared you, Davus, that

158 Cf. *Exp.Ps.* 25.68-69, 29.103-04, 33.212-13, 36.302, 57.36-37, 118.2034-42, 118.3087-88, 137.135-36.

159 Cf. *Exp.Ps.* 11.40, 29.147-48, 50.338-40, 57.208-09.

160 Cf. *Exp.Ps.* 50.209-10.

161 The Ciceronian text is slightly different from the quotation here: *Pro rege Deiotaro* 5.15: *Is igitur non modo a te periculo liberatus sed etiam honore amplissimo ornatus, arguitur domi te suae interficere voluisse.*

162 Cf. *Exp.Ps.* 36.374-75, 39.24-25, 50.104, 117.246-47, 118.2844-45, 131.329-30, 143.148-49.

163 Cf. *Exp.Ps.* 50.304-05.

you would do what the common run of slaves often does, that you might fool me with tricks' (*Andria* 582–83, with slight changes in word order).

Argument from effects: when something is approved as a result of past actions, as Virgil says, 'Fear proves ignoble souls' (*Aeneid* 4.13).

Argument from comparison: when by comparison of persons or causes the reason for a decision is fashioned by implication, as Virgil says, 'You can draw Aeneas out from under the hands of the Greeks; is it unlawful that we give some aid in turn to the Rutuli?' (*Aeneid* 10.81 and 84, with slight change in word order).

16. Arguments drawn from external circumstances are called by the Greeks *atechnos*, i.e., lacking skill: like evidence. Evidence arises from: persons;¹⁶⁴ the authority of nature; the authority of circumstances,¹⁶⁵ which has eight modes: talents,¹⁶⁶ resources, age, luck, skill, experience, necessity,¹⁶⁷ and the meeting of chance circumstance; the words and actions of our ancestors;¹⁶⁸ torture.¹⁶⁹ Evidence is everything that is drawn from some external source to gain credence. A person whose evidence carries the weight to gain credence is not just anyone, but must be praiseworthy because of the decency of his moral character. Natural authority comprises the greatest excellence. There are many kinds of evidence that carry authority: talent, riches, age, luck, skill, experience, necessity, the meeting of fortuitous circumstances. Credence is sought from the words and actions of our ancestors by recalling the words and deeds of the ancients. Credence is provided by torture, after which we believe that no one would lie. The matters treated under circumstances do not need definitions because they are obvious from their names.}

17. Remember that commonplaces indeed offer arguments commonly to orators, dialecticians, poets, and lawyers. When they prove something in particular, they are of use to rhetoricians, poets, lawyers, but when they discuss matters in general they serve philosophers [dialecticians].¹⁷⁰ Really

164 Cf. *Exp.Ps.* 6.274–75, 17.430–31, 23.98, 140.30.

165 Cf. *Exp.Ps.* 101.404–05.

166 Cf. *Exp.Ps.* 35.69–70.

167 Cf. *Exp.Ps.* 31.128–29, 37.144–45.

168 Cf. *Exp.Ps.* 43.56–58.

169 Cf. *Exp.Ps.* 43.289.

170 Cf. *Exp.Ps.* 72.289–93: *Sciendum est sane de topicis omnia quidem argumenta procedere; sed quando generaliter dicuntur, ad dialecticos pertinent; quando autem particulatim et specialiter exprimuntur, oratoribus conuenire non dubium est.* ('We must in fact realise that all the arguments follow from the topics chosen; when cited as generalisations they are appropriate to logicians, but as expressed in specific, particular issues they are undoubtedly fitting for orators' [trans. Walsh, 2.204]).

a remarkable kind of work, to be able to bring together whatever the versatility and variety the human intellect displays in its search for meaning. This kind of work envelopes the free and voluntary intellect, for wherever the intellect turns, whatever thought it engages in, it must fall upon some of these commonplaces that have been discussed.

18. We think that it will be useful to summarize by whose labour these matters can be spoken of in Latin, so that these authors will not fail to achieve their fame and so that the task will be recognized by us and grant the authors their due. Victorinus the orator translated the *Isagoge*;¹⁷¹ Boethius, the patrician, published a commentary on it in five books.¹⁷² Victorinus also translated the *Categories* and wrote a commentary on it in eight books.¹⁷³ Victorinus also translated the *Perihermenias* into Latin;¹⁷⁴ the patrician Boethius wrote a point by point commentary on it in six books.¹⁷⁵ [In place of ‘Victorinus ... six books,’ α offers: The patrician Boethius translated the *Isagoge*, leaving also twin commentaries on it. The same patrician Boethius translated the *Categories*, and he fashioned a commentary on it in three books.¹⁷⁶ The above-mentioned patrician Boethius translated the *Perihermenias* into Latin; his two commentaries on it treat the text with a most detailed discussion.¹⁷⁷] Apuleius of Madaura <briefly explained the categorical

171 Victorinus, *Introductio in Aristotelis Categorias* (he does not use the term *Isagoge*, which first appears in Boethius). This work is not extant, but parts of it can be recovered from the lemmata in the first Latin commentary on the *Isagoge* by Boethius, and from Victorinus, *De definitionibus*. See P. Hadot, 179–87. Minio-Paluello, in his preface to his edition of the translation by Boethius of Porphyry’s *Isagoge* (Aristoteles Latinus 1.6–7), suggests (xxxvi, note 4) that it is not clear from Cassiodorus’s remarks whether the translation by Victorinus was in the Vivarium library.

172 Boethius, *In Isagogen Porphyrii Commenta*, editio secunda, ed. G. Schepss–S. Brandt (CSEL 48.1, 133–348) [CPL 881].

173 The translation of the *Categories* by Victorinus, if it existed, has vanished. Cassiodorus, who seems here to know of it, never uses it. It is most unlikely that Victorinus wrote a commentary on the *Categories*. See P. Hadot, 109–12, 187–88.

174 If there was a translation of the *Peri Hermenias* by Victorinus, it has left no trace. See P. Hadot, 189.

175 Boethius, *Commentarii In Librum Aristoteles ΠΕΡΙ ΕΡΜΗΝΕΙΑΣ*, editio secunda, ed. C. Meiser, Leipzig: Teubner, 1880, vol. 2 [CPL 883].

176 Boethius, *In Categorias Aristotelis libri iv*, PL 64.159–264 [CPL 882]. Cassiodorus speaks of a commentary in three books. Courcelle, ‘Histoire’, 83, thinks that Cassiodorus, at the time of his first redaction of the *Institutiones*, actually only summarized the first three books of Boethius’s work that were in his possession. P. Hadot, 111, however, thinks that there is only a confusion of Roman numbers (III and IIII).

177 Boethius, *In librum Aristotelis περὶ ἑρμηνείας commentarii editio duplex*, ed. C. Meiser, 2 vols, Leipzig: Teubner, 1887–1880 [CPL 883].

sylogisms¹⁷⁸ and Victorinus> wrote about the hypothetical syllogism¹⁷⁹; [In place of ‘Apuleius ... hypothetical syllogism,’ α offers: Apuleius of Madaura briefly explained the categorical syllogisms; the above-mentioned patrician Boethius treated most clearly the hypothetical syllogisms.¹⁸⁰] {Marius Victorinus also carefully distinguished fifteen types of definitions.¹⁸¹} Cicero translated Aristotle’s *Topics* into Latin. Victorinus, who loved and studied Latin authors, wrote a commentary on Cicero’s translation in four books.¹⁸² [In place of ‘Cicero translated ... four books, α offers: Cicero translated the *Topics* of Aristotle into Latin in one book; the patrician Boethius, who watches over and loves Latin authors (Δ omits this clause), set out a commentary on this translation in eight books.¹⁸³ As a matter of fact the previously mentioned patrician (‘the previously ... patrician’ is omitted by Δ) Boethius also translated these same *Topics* of Aristotle into Latin eloquence in eight books.¹⁸⁴] [I thought it appropriate to collect these authoritative books not unsuitably into one manuscript so that whatever pertains to dialectic may be included in one codex. We have had the many commentaries on the different texts, since they are lengthy, written down in separate books and we have left them to you with the Lord’s aid in one collection.

19. We have surveyed the liberal arts, insofar as we have judged them useful to beginners, to enable them to reach the entrance of the disciplines through open doors as it were. Although there are difficulties in the way of entering and learning these disciplines, the toil of the study of elements persists until one sees what sweetness they have; but when scholars have reached the stage of mature competence, each one regards it as delightful to have endured the troubles of his endeavour. We now turn to the illustrious divisions of these arts in which Greek is correctly thought to surpass the

178 Apuleius, *Liber ΠΕΡΙ ΕΡΜΗΝΕΙΑΣ* 9–11 (186.11–190.28 Thomas).

179 The *De syllogismis hypotheticis* of Victorinus is not extant. See P. Hadot, 143–61.

180 Boethius, *De syllogismo hypothetico*, *PL* 64.831–876 [CPL 886]. Chadwick, 276, mentions an edition by L. Obertello, *A.M. Severino Boezio de hypotheticis syllogismis*, Brescia, 1969, but there is no listing for this book in the United States.

181 For an accessible version of this work of Marius Victorinus by T. Stangl, *Tulliana et Mario-Victoriniana*, Munich: Max Wild’sche Buchdruckerei, 1888 [‘Program des K. Luitpold-Gymnasiums in München für das Studienjahr 1887/88’], see P. Hadot, 346.18–347.5.

182 This work of Victorinus is not extant. See P. Hadot, 115–41.

183 Boethius, *Commentaria in Ciceronis Topica*, ed. J.C. Orelli–I.G. Baiter, *Ciceronis opera*, 5.1, Zürich: Typis Orellii, Fuesslini et Sociorum, 1833, 270–388. The work has come down to us in six books. There is an excellent English translation with introduction and notes: Eleonore Stump, *Boethius’s In Ciceronis Topica*, Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1988.

184 Probably identical with the previous item.

Latin language. We will try not so much to explain these briefly as to sketch them. For why should what is found clear and plain in the original authors be discussed as it were more distinctively and fully?}

20. We must now consider, however, since we have arrived at this point, what we touched on in the rhetorical section, namely, the difference between an art and a discipline, so that difference in the terms in their confusion not confound the reader. Plato and Aristotle, worthy teachers of secular letters, considered the difference between an art and a discipline in the following way: an art involves working in an accustomed state with things that have the possibility of being other than they are; a discipline, however, is concerned with those things that cannot turn out differently or other than they are.¹⁸⁵ {We assume that this means matters concerning worldly learning, since only divine letters cannot deceive, for they hold the unmovable personal authority of truth. We have heard that Felix Capella wrote a kind of anthology on the disciplines to enable the uneducated brothers to become acquainted with such literature. Nevertheless, up to now we have been able to acquire only a small amount. But it is better for you that those selections not disappear at some time and that these remaining, although not many, be soon available to those who are interested.} Now let us begin with mathematics.

Mathematics

21. Mathematics is a science that we can call in Latin theoretical since it considers quantities in the abstract.¹⁸⁶ We define as abstract a quantity that is separated mentally from matter or other accidents, for example, equal and unequal or other things of this sort treated by calculation alone [or other things that are treated by reasoning alone]. This science of mathematics is divided as follows: arithmetic, music, geometry, astronomy.

Arithmetic is the study of quantity (that which can be counted) in itself.

Music is the study that discusses numbers that have a relationship to those that are found in tones.

¹⁸⁵ Ammonius, *In Porphyrii Isagogen Prooemium* (CAG 4.3) 6.29–7.5 Busse: αὗται δὲ αἱ τέχναι καὶ ἐπιστῆμαι κατὰ μὲν τοὺς λόγους οὐδὲν διαφέρουσιν ἀλλήλων, ... κατὰ δὲ τὴν ὕλην διαλλάττουσιν. αἱ μὲν γὰρ ἐπιστῆμαι περὶ τὰ ὡσαύτως ἔχοντα καταγίνονται, οἷον ἀστρονομία γεωμετρία ἀριθμητική, αἱ δὲ τέχναι περὶ τὰ ὡς ἐπὶ τὸ πολὺ καὶ μεταβαλλόμενα. See Courcelle, *Late Latin Writers*, 342–43, who points out that Boethius cannot be Cassiodorus's source.

¹⁸⁶ See above, Preface, 4 towards the end; 3.6.

Geometry is the study of stationary magnitudes and shapes.

Astronomy is the study of the movements of the stars in heaven. It considers and investigates by reason all configurations and movements of the stars in relation to one another and to the earth.¹⁸⁷

We will discuss [expatiate on] these subjects a little more fully in their turn to display their excellence.

22. Now let us discuss the expression ‘disciplines’.¹⁸⁸ Disciplines are those pursuits that are independent of opinion and therefore never deceive; they are called disciplines because they are obliged to observe their own rules. Our attention to these disciplines neither <enlarges them,> nor are they diminished <by a narrow intellectual perspective>.¹⁸⁹ They do not undergo any [other] changes, but remain strong in themselves and preserve their rules with unchangeable firmness. Frequent reflection on the disciplines sharpens our understanding, clears the mud of ignorance, and leads, with the Lord’s help, soundness of mind smiles upon us, to theoretical contemplation. Josephus, the most learned of the Hebrews, in the first book of his *Antiquities*, chapter nine, says that Abraham first brought arithmetic and astronomy to the Egyptians.¹⁹⁰ The Egyptians, a people of sharp intellect, took up the seeds from him, and cultivated the other disciplines more broadly for themselves. Our holy Fathers properly persuaded men of a scholarly disposition to read these sciences since they do much to turn our appetite from carnal things and make us desire what with the Lord’s aid we can see with the heart alone. It is, therefore, time to discuss these disciplines individually and briefly.

¹⁸⁷ See above, 3.6.

¹⁸⁸ See above, 3.20.

¹⁸⁹ Boethius, *De arithmetica* 1.1 (CCSL 94A.1.1.9–12): *Esse autem illa dicimus, quae nec intentione crescunt nec retractione minuuntur nec uariationibus permutantur, sed in propria semper ui suae se naturae subsidiis nixa custodiunt.*

¹⁹⁰ Josephus, *Antiquitates* 1.167: ... τὴν τε ἀριθμητικὴν αὐτοῖς (sc. the Egyptians) χαρίζεται καὶ τὰ περὶ ἀστρονομίαν παραδίδωσι. πρὸ γὰρ τῆς Ἀβραάμου παρουσίας Αἰγύπτιοι τούτων εἶχον ἀμαθῶς· ἐκ Χαλδαίων γὰρ ταῦτ’ ἐφοίτησεν εἰς Αἴγυπτον, ὅθεν ἦλθε καὶ εἰς τοὺς Ἑλλήνας (‘he introduced them to arithmetic and astronomy. For before the coming of Abraham the Egyptians were ignorant of these sciences, which thus travelled from the Chaldeans into Egypt, whence they passed to the Greeks’ [trans. Thackeray, 83 LCL]).

III. Arithmetic

1. Secular writers maintain that arithmetic is the first mathematical discipline because arithmetic is essential to explain the excellences of music, geometry, and astronomy. For example, the relation of the single to the double that music involves needs arithmetic; <geometry also requires arithmetic because it deals with the triangle, the quadrangle, and the like;> astronomy also requires arithmetic since it considers the numbers of positions in the movement of the stars. Arithmetic, however, can exist without music, geometry, or astronomy. Arithmetic is the source and mother of these other disciplines.¹⁹¹ Pythagoras regarded this science so highly that he remarked that God created everything by number or measure. He said that some things were fashioned in motion and other things in place in such a way, however, that only those disciplines of which we have spoken received substance.¹⁹² I believe this, and take my start as many philosophers have done from that statement of the prophet, that God arranged everything according to number, measure, and weight <Wisdom 11:21>.

2. This section deals with discrete quantity that produces the types of numbers joined to one another by no common boundary. For 5 is not tied to 10 by any mutual union through any common boundary nor 6 to 4 and 7 to 3. Arithmetic receives its name because its special subject is number. Number is a multitude made up of units,¹⁹³ as 3, 5, 10, 20, and so forth. The goal of arithmetic is to teach us the nature of number in the abstract and those things that are accidental to it; for example evenness, oddness, and so forth.

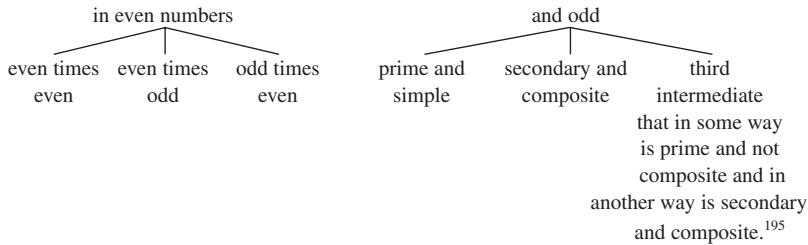
3. Number,¹⁹⁴ however, is divided

191 Nicomachus of Gerasa (fl. c. AD 100), *Introductio Arithmetica* 1.4.1–2 (9.5–9 Hoche): Τίνα οὖν ἀναγκαῖον πρωτίστην τῶν τεσσάρων τούτων μεθόδων ἐκμανθάνειν; ἢ δηλονότι τὴν φύσει πασῶν προϋπάρχουσαν καὶ ... οἰονεῖ πρὸς τὰς ἄλλας μητρὸς λόγον ἔπέχουσαν. ἔστι δὲ αὕτη ἡ ἀριθμητική... ‘What ten of these four methods must we first learn? Evidently, the one which naturally exists before them all... and, as it were, [takes the place] of mother to the others. And this is arithmetic...’ (trans. D’Ooge, 187). Cf. Boethius, *De arithmetica* 1.1 (CCSL 94A.1.1.73–130). On the order of the disciplines, see Kühnert; Moorhead; and Simon, ‘Das Verhältniss’.

192 Cf. Nicomachus of Gerasa, *Introductio Arithmetica* 1.6.1 (12.1–12 Hoche).

193 Euclid (fl. between 325 and 250 BC), *Elementa* 7, Definitions 2: Ἀριθμὸς δὲ τὸ ἐκ μονάδων συγγεόμενον πλῆθος (‘A number is a multitude composed of units’ [trans. Thomas, 1.67 LCL]).

194 For a discussion of what follows see the section on Pythagorean arithmetic in Thomas, 1.66–141. Courcelle, *Late Latin Writers*, 348, notes that Cassiodorus’ discussion of arithmetic is closer to Nicomachus’ work than to the paraphrase of it by Boethius. Most likely Cassiodorus used the lost translation of Nicomachus by Apuleius (*Late Latin Writers*, 349).



<In α this table appears partly here, partly at '11, etc.' below, partly after 'go further,' below.> An even number is one that can be divided into two equal parts, as 2, 4, 6, 8, 10, etc. An odd number is one that cannot be divided into two equal parts as 3, 5, 7, 9, 11, etc. A multiple of an even number can be divided into two equal parts as far as the unit, for example, 64 are [is] divided into 32, 32 into 16, 16 into 8, 8 into 4, 4 into 2, 2 into 1 and 1. An even multiple of an odd number can be equally divided only once into two equal parts, as <10 into 5>, 14 into 7, 18 into 9, and the like. A multiple of an odd and an even number can be divided in several ways according to the quality of the parts; not, however, that it may reach unity: for example, 24 into 2 times 12, 12 into 2 times 6, 6 into 2 times 3, and one cannot go further. {Among the odd numbers,} a prime and simple number is one that can have unity as its only divisor; for example, 3, 5, 7, 11, <13,> 17, and the like. A secondary and composite number is one that not only takes unity as a divisor but also another number, for example, 9, 15, 21, and the like. An intermediate number is one that in some way seems to be prime <and> simple and in another way secondary and composite, for example 9 when it is compared to 25 is prime and simple because it does not have a number in common except unity; if it is compared to 15 it is secondary and composite since there is a common factor for it beyond unity, that is the number 3 that measures 9 as 3 times and 15 as 5 times 3.

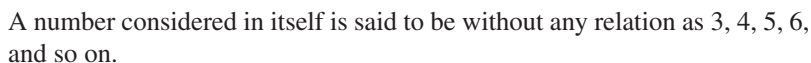
4. Another division of even and odd numbers. <A number is is>



195 Cf. Boethius, *De arithmetica* 1.3, 8, 13 (CCSL 94A, pp. 15–16, 20, 36–37).

196 Cf. Boethius, *De arithmetica* 1.19 (CCSL 94A, pp. 48–51).

5. A third division of numbers as a whole. Every number is

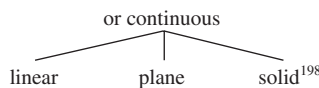


197 Cf. Boethius, *De arithmetica* 1.20–22 (CCSL 94A, pp. 51–56).

A superparticular number is a larger number that contains within [below] itself the lesser number with which it is compared, as well as one unit of it, for example 3 compared to 2 contains in itself 2 and another 1, which is the half of 2; and 4 when compared to 3, contains in itself 3 and another 1, which is a third of 3; also 5 compared to 4 has in itself 4 and another 1, which is a fourth part of 4, etc. A subsuperparticular number is a lesser number that is contained in the larger number with another unit either half, third, fourth, or fifth, for example 2 to 3, {3 to 4,} 4 to 5, etc. A superpartient number is one that contains in itself the entire lesser number and in addition two other units or three or four or five or more, for example 5 compared to 3 has in itself 3 and besides two other units; 7 compared to 4 has in itself 4 and three other units; 9 compared to 5 has in itself 5 and another 4 units. A subsuperpartient number is one that is contained in the superpartient number with 2, 3 or more other units, for example 3 is contained in 5 with two other units; <4 is contained in 7 with three additional units;> 5 in 9 with four units. A multiple superparticular number is one that when compared to a number less than itself contains in itself the entire lesser number in a multiple with an additional unit, for example 5 compared to 2 contains in itself twice 2 with [and] one unit; 9 compared to 4 contains in itself twice 4 and an additional unit. A submultiple superparticular number is one that when it is compared to a number larger than itself is contained by the larger in a multiple with one additional unit, for example 2 compared to 5 is contained in it twice with one unit left over. A multiple superpartient number is one that when compared with a number less than itself contains it as a multiple with some parts left over, for example 8 compared to 3 contains in itself twice 3 with a remainder of 2; 14 compared to 6 contains in itself twice 6 with a remainder of 2; 16 compared to 7 contains it twice with a remainder of 2; 18 compared to 8 contains in itself twice 8 and a remainder of 2. A submultiple superpartient number is one that when it is compared with a number larger than itself, is contained by it in a multiple with some additional units, for example 3 compared to 8 is contained twice with a remainder of 2; 4 compared to 15 is contained <3 times> with a remainder of 3.

6. There follows a fourth division of number as a whole – Numbers are

either discrete



198 Cf. Boethius, *De Arithmetica* 2.4 (CCSL 94A, pp. 105–10).

A discrete number is one that consists of separate units for example 3 as distinct from 4, 5 from 6 and so forth. A continuous number is one that is contained by joined units, for example 3, if it is considered in a magnitude, i.e., in a line or a plane or a solid is called continuous; likewise 4 and 5. A linear number is one that starting from unity is written in a line up to infinity, for which reasons alpha is set down to describe lines because this letter signifies 1 among the Greeks— $\alpha\alpha\alpha$. A plane number is one that is bounded not only by length but also by height [breadth], as a triangular number, a square number, a pentagonal number, a circular number, and others that are always enclosed in a plane.¹⁹⁹ A triangular number is as follows:



A square number:



A pentagonal number <is> as follows:

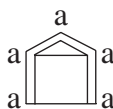


A circular number is one that when it is multiplied by itself, beginning from itself turns back to itself, for example 5 times 5 is 25 as the diagram indicates:

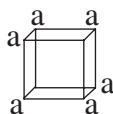


So also in the number 6 it turns out the 6 times 6 is 36 and 6 times 36 is 216. A solid number is one that has the dimensions length, breadth and height, like pyramids which rise like flames

¹⁹⁹ For a discussion of figured numbers see Nicomachus, *Introductio Arithmetica* 2.7–20 (86–119 Hoche; trans. D'Ooge, 239–64). For a comment on this subject, see Thomas, 1.89, note a: '[The discussion of figured numbers] is of importance for the student of Greek mysticism, but has little interest for the modern mathematician.'



as cubes, like dice



spheres, which are equally round in every direction: a spherical number is one that multiplied by a circular number starting from itself returns to itself, for example 5 times 5 is 25; this circular number when it is multiplied by itself, makes a sphere, <i.e.> 5 times 25 is 125.

7. Therefore when these matters are carefully considered, remember that this discipline is superior to the others because, as we said before, it needs none of the other disciplines. The disciplines that follow require the discipline of arithmetic for their existence, as the excellence of arithmetic demonstrates. Among the Greeks Nicomachus diligently explained this subject.²⁰⁰ His work was previously [first] translated into Latin by Apuleius of Madaura and was again translated into Latin by the patrician Boethius for the Roman reader.²⁰¹ Anyone who uses these works often will most certainly be filled with the light of reason insofar as mankind has the capacity for it. To a large extent this discipline dominates our lives, since we learn the hours from it, we reckon the course of the months by it, we recognize the course of the returning year, we are saved from confusion by number. Take away calculation from the age and everything is plunged into blind disorder. A man who does not understand reckoning does not differ from the other animals. This is as [so] glorious a subject as it is necessary for our lives; for through it [through this very thing] we clearly learn what we possess and, after proper accountings [accounting], we know how much our expenditures are. Number gives order to all things; through number we learn what we must do first and what we must do second.

{8. If you look carefully for the basis of such great matters even the miracles of the Lord become susceptible to numerical explanation. The first number pertains to the one God, as we read in the Pentateuch: 'Hear O Israel! The Lord is our God, the Lord alone!' <Deuteronomy 6:4> The

²⁰⁰ Nicomachus of Gerasa, *Introductio Arithmetica*.

²⁰¹ The translation of Apuleius is not extant; Boethius, *De arithmetica*.

second number refers to the two Testaments, as it says in the Book of Kings: ‘And he made in Dabir two cherubim of ten cubits in height’ <I Kings 6:23>. Finally, the sweet reward of all our hope rests in the holy Trinity, not because it is subject to number, but because the power of its majesty displays the usefulness of number. Indeed, unity is understood to be in the essence of the divine, but Trinity is in the persons. For it says in the Epistle of John: ‘There are three things that bear witness: the Spirit, and the water, and the blood’ <I John 5:8>. Concerning the four evangelists we also read in Ezechiel: ‘Within it were figures resembling four living creatures’ <Ezechiel 1:5>. The fifth number refers to the five books of Moses, as it says in Paul: ‘In the church I had rather speak five words with my understanding’ <I Corinthians 14:19>. ‘On the sixth day God made man, in His own image and likeness’ <Genesis 1:26>.²⁰² Indeed we call the Spirit itself Holy and believe that it is sevenfold; number is necessary to enable us to understand the highest and most omnipotent matters.} Now we will take up music that is sweetness in its name and in its particular excellence.

{V. Music}²⁰³

1. A certain Gaudentius writing on music said that Pythagoras discovered the elements of this subject from the sound of hammers²⁰⁴ and by the striking of taut strings. That very learned man, [our friend] Mutianus, translated this work into Latin.²⁰⁵ The quality of the work undertaken indicates his talent. Clement of Alexandria, a priest, in his book *Against the Pagans*, said that music took its beginning from the Muses and explains carefully why the Muses were invented.²⁰⁶ For [And] the Muses themselves are named *apo tu*

202 For the discussion of the first six numbers, see Eucherius, *Formulae spiritalis intelligentiae* 10 (CSEL 31.59–60 Wotke) [CPL 488].

203 I have made use of the translation of Helen Dill Goode and Gertrude C. Drake in this section.

204 Gaudentius, *Harmonica Introductio* 11: Τὴν ἀρχὴν τῆς τούτων εὐρέσεως Πυθαγόραν ἱστοροῦσι λαβεῖν ἀπὸ τύχης παρίοντα χαλκεῖον τοὺς ἐπὶ τὸν ἄκμονα πύτυπους τῶν ῥαιστήρων αἰσθόμενον διαφώνους τε καὶ συμφώνους [340.4–7 Jan] (‘They tell that Pythagoras gained the beginning of the discovery of these matters when he was passing by chance a forge and recognized from the blows of the hammers on the anvil the discords and harmonies’).

205 This work is not extant.

206 Clement of Alexandria, *Protrepticus* 31 (47 Marcovich). Cassiodorus does not cite Clement exactly. What Clement offers is a euhemeristic explanation of the origin of the Muses and he never explicitly connects them with music as such.

maso, i.e., from seeking,²⁰⁷ since through them, as the ancients believed, the power of song and the harmony of voice was sought. We also find Censorinus, who, in a work presented to Quintus Cerellius (*On his Birthday*) discussed the discipline of music; nor should his section on another part of learning <viz., astrology?> be neglected either.²⁰⁸ It is useful to read, to enable the depth of the mind to store this information by frequent consideration.

2. The discipline of music, then, extends through all acts of our life in the following way. First, if we obey the commands of the Creator, and we keep with pure minds the rules set out by him, whatever we say, or however we are moved by the inward pulses of our veins, is shown to be linked by musical rhythms to the virtues of harmony. Music indeed is the discipline of proper harmony; if we live properly we are always associated with such a discipline. But when we are wicked, we do not have music. Furthermore, the heaven, the earth, and everything that takes place in them according to divine economy, do not lack the discipline of music. For [And] Pythagoras bears witness that this world was founded through music²⁰⁹ and can be given order by it.

3. Religion itself is strongly associated with music, for example {there is} the decachord of the Ten Commandments, the twang of the harp, the drums, the melody of the organ, and the sound of cymbals. The Psalter itself also is certainly named like [for its likeness] to the musical instrument, because it contains the sweet and pleasing harmony of heavenly excellence.

4. Now let us consider [discuss] the divisions of music, as they have been handed down from our ancestors. Music is a discipline that deals with numbers, which relate to qualities that are found in sounds, as double, triple, quadruple and the like indicate the relationship of one thing to another.²¹⁰

5. Music has three parts: harmonics – rhythmic – metrics.²¹¹

207 See Maltby, 399, who suggests that *maso* perhaps is to be understood as μαστεύω, 'seek'.

208 Censorinus, *De die natali ad Q. Caerellium*, ed. N. Sallmann, Leipzig: Teubner, 1983.

209 Censorinus, *De die natali* 13.1 (22.10–23.1 Sallmann): ... *Pythagoras prodidit hunc totum mundum musica factum ratione...* ('Pythagoras stated that the whole universe was constructed on a musical principle').

210 Cf. *Exp.Ps.* 97.219–21: *Musica est disciplina quae rerum sibi congruentium, id est sonorum differentias et conuenientias perscrutatur* ('Music is the discipline that examines the differences and harmonies of things in accord with each other, that is, their sounds' [trans. Walsh, 2.436]).

211 *Exp.Ps.* 80.97–102: *Est enim disciplinae ipsius magna uis delectabilisque cognitio, quam doctores saecularium litterarum... fecerunt doctrinabili lectione cognosci, quae in rerum natura prius tenebantur abscondita. Prima ergo huius disciplinae partitio est harmonica,*

Harmonics is the musical discipline that distinguishes high and low pitch in sounds.²¹²

Rhythmics is the discipline that considers the coming together of words [in the joining of words] whether sounds fit together well or badly.

Metrics is that discipline that discovers by laudable calculation the measurement [measurements] of the different meters, such as the heroic, the iambic, and the elegiac, etc.

6. There are three kinds of musical instruments: percussion – strings – wind.²¹³ Percussion instruments include bronze and silver hand-bells, and other types that give forth sweet tinkling sound when struck by a rigid piece of metal. Stringed instruments are those that have skilfully tied strings that {will} sweetly delight the ears when <just> struck with a(n) {applied} plectrum. Among these are different kinds of harps. Wind instruments are those that are set in motion to create the sound when filled with breath. Among these are trumpets, reeds, organ, bagpipes, etc.

7. It now remains for us to speak about consonances. A consonance is the modulation of a low pitch to a high pitch or of a high pitch to a low pitch, creating euphony in a voice or in a wind instrument or in percussion [or in percussion or in a wind instrument]. There are six consonances:²¹⁴ (1) the diatessaron; (2) the diapente; (3) the diapasen; (4) the diapasen and diatessaron; (5) the diapasen and diapente; (6) the double diapasen.

1. A diatessaron is a consonance that consists of a 4:3 ratio and is made up of four notes from which it receives its name.

2. The diapente is a consonance that consists of a 3:2 ratio and is made up of five notes [whence also it takes its name].

rhythmica, metrica ('The discipline of music incorporates great power and knowledge that brings delight; teachers of secular literature... have made it possible through theoretical texts to ascertain what was earlier regarded as hidden from view in the nature of the world. The first division of this discipline, then, is into harmonics, rhythmics, and metrics' [trans. Walsh, 2.295]).

212 Cf. Alypius (3rd or 4th century AD), *Isagoge* (367.6–9 Jan): αὕτη δὲ ἁρμονικὴ καλεῖται [δια]κριτικὴν τινα δύναμιν ἔχουσα καὶ καταληπτικὴν τῶν ἐμμελῶν καὶ διαστηματικῶν φθόγγων καὶ τῶν ἐν αὐτοῖς γινομένων διαφορῶν ('This [art] is called harmonics that has a certain critical power capable of apprehending harmonious sounds and those that move in intervals as well as the differences that arise between them').

213 *Exp.Ps.* 80.102–04: *Secunda partitio instrumentorum eius est in percussionalia, in tensibilia, in flatilia* ('The second division, that of musical instruments, is into percussion, strings, and wind [trans. Walsh, 2.295, slightly altered]).

214. *Exp.Ps.* 80.104: *Tertia diuiditur in symphonias sex* ('The third division is into six harmonies' [trans. Walsh, 2.295]).

3. The diapason is a consonance that is also called the octave; it is made up of a 2:1 ratio, i.e., double, and it is produced by an interval of eight notes from which it receives its name either octave or diapason because among the ancients the harp consisted of eight strings; therefore it is called the diapason, consisting as it were of all intervals.

4. The diapason and diatessaron is a consonance that consists of a ratio 24:8; it is made up of eleven notes.

5. The diapason and diapente is a harmony that consists of a ratio 3:1; it is made up of an interval of twelve notes.

6. The disdiapason, i.e., the double diapason, is a consonance that is in a ratio of 4:1; it is made up of an interval of fifteen notes.²¹⁵

8. The mode, which consists of the pitch or dominant tone quality of the sound, is a distinguishing characteristic and quantity of the whole aggregate of sounds. There are fifteen modes:²¹⁶ hypodorian, hypoiastian,²¹⁷ hypophrygian, hypoeolian, hypolydian, dorian, iastian, phrygian, aeolian, lydian, hyperdorian, hyperiastian, hyperphrygian, hyperaeolian, hyperlydian.

1. The hypodorian mode is the lowest of all in pitch; therefore it is also called the bottom mode.

2. The hypoiastian is a half tone higher than the hypodorian.

3. The hypophrygian is a half tone higher than the hypoiastian, and a full tone higher than the hypodorian.

4. The hypoeolian is a half tone higher than the hypophrygian, a full tone higher than the hypoiastian, and a tone and a half higher than the hypodorian.

5. The hypolydian is a half tone higher than the hypoeolian, a tone higher than the hypophrygian, and a tone and a half higher than the hypoiastian, and two tones higher than the hypodorian.

6. The dorian is a half tone higher than the hypolydian, a tone higher than the hypoeolian, a tone and a half higher than the hypophrygian, two tones higher than the hypoiastian, two and a half tones higher than the hypodorian, i.e., the consonance of the diatessaron.

7. The iastian is a half tone higher than the dorian, a tone higher than the hypolydian, a tone and a half higher than the hypoeolian, two tones higher than the hypophrygian, two and a half {tones} higher than the hypoiastian, i.e., the consonance of the diatessaron, and three tones higher than the hypodorian.

215 On this section, cf. Gaudentius, *Harmonia introductio* 9 (338–39 Jan).

216 *Exp.Ps.* 80.105: *Quarta diuiditur in tonos quindecim* ('[T]he fourth [division is] into fifteen tones' [trans. Walsh, 2.295]).

217 Hypoiastian, iastian, and hyperiastian are other names for the ionic modes.

8. The phrygian is a half tone higher than the iastian, a tone higher than the dorian, one and a half tones higher than the hypolydian, two tones higher than the hypoeolian, two and a half tones higher than the hypophrygian, i.e., the consonance of the diatessaron, three tones higher than the hypo-astian, three and a half tones higher than the hypodorian, i.e., the consonance of the diapente.

9. The aeolian is a half tone higher than the phrygian, one tone higher than the iastian, one and a half tones higher than the dorian, {two tones} higher than the hypolydian, two and a half {tones} higher than {the hypoeolian,}, i.e., the consonance of the diatessaron, three tones higher than the hypophrygian, three and a half {tones} higher than the hypoastian, i.e., the consonance of the diapente, four tones higher than the hypodorian.

10. The lydian is a half tone higher than the aeolian, one tone higher than the phrygian, one and a half tones higher than the iastian, two tones higher than the dorian, two and a half tones higher than the hypolydian, i.e., the consonance of the diatessaron, three tones higher than the hypoeolian, three and a half tones higher than the hypophrygian, i.e., the consonance of the diapente, four tones higher than the hypoastian, four and a half <tones> higher than the hypodorian.

11 The hyperdorian is a half tone higher than the lydian, one tone higher than the aeolian, one and a half tones higher than the phrygian, two tones higher than the iastian, two and a half {tones} higher than the dorian, i.e., the consonance of the diatessaron, three tones higher than the hypolydian, three and a half tones higher than the hypoeolian, i.e., the consonance of the diapente, four tones higher than the hypophrygian, four and a half tones higher than the hypoastian, five {tones} higher than the hypodorian.

12. The hyperastian is a half tone higher than the hyperdorian, one tone higher than the lydian, one and a half tones higher than the aeolian, two tones higher than the phrygian, two and a half tones higher than the iastian, i.e., the consonance of the diatessaron, three tones higher than the dorian, three and a half tones higher than the hypolydian, i.e., the consonance of the diapente, four tones higher than the hypoeolian, four and a half tones higher than the hypophrygian, five tones higher than the hyperastian, five and half tones higher than the hypodorian.

13. The hyperphrygian is a half tone higher than the hyperastian, one tone higher than the hyperdorian, one and a half tones higher than the lydian, two tones higher than the aeolian, two and a half tones higher than the phrygian, i.e., the consonance of the diatessaron, three tones higher than the iastian, three and a half tones higher than the dorian, i.e., the consonance of the diapente, four tones higher than the hypolydian, four and a half tones higher than the hypoeolian, five tones higher than the hypophrygian, {five and} a half tones higher {than the hypoastian,} six tones higher than the

hypodorian, i.e., the consonance of the diapason.

14. The hyperaeolian is a half tone higher than the hyperphrygian, one tone higher than the hyperiastian, one and a half tones higher than the hyperdorian, two tones higher than the lydian, two and a half tones higher than the aeolian, i.e., the consonance of the diatessaron, <three tones higher than the phrygian, three and a half tones higher than the iastian, i.e., the consonance of the diapente,> four tones higher than the dorian, four and a half tones higher than the hypolydian, five tones higher than the hypoeolian five and a half tones higher than the hypophrygian, six tones higher than the hypoiastian, i.e., the consonance of the diapason, six and a half tones higher than the hypodorian.

15. The hyperlydian is the last and highest of all. It is a half tone higher than the hyperaeolian, one tone higher than the hyperphrygian, two tones higher than the hyperdorian, two and a half tones higher than the lydian, i.e., the consonance of the diatessaron, three tones higher than the aeolian, three and a half tones higher than the phrygian, i.e., the consonance of the diapente, four tones higher than the iastian, four and a half tones higher than the dorian, five tones higher than the hypolydian, five and a half <tones> higher than the hypoeolian, six tones higher than the hyperphrygian, i.e., the consonance of the diapason, six and a half tones higher than the hypoiastian, seven tones higher than the hypodorian.²¹⁸

It is clear from this that the hyperlydian is the highest of all modes and is seven tones higher than the hypodorian, the lowest of all. As Varro reminds us, their excellence is useful to calm the aroused spirits; they also attract beasts as well as serpents, birds and dolphins to hear their harmony.²¹⁹

9. Leaving aside as fictions the lyre of Orpheus and the song of the Sirens, what shall we say of David? By the knowledge of the most salutary harmonies he drew unclean spirits from Saul and in a novel way through his hearing restored sanity to the king, an achievement the doctors were unable to accomplish by the power of herbs <I Samuel 16:13–23>. They say that Aesclepiades, whom the ancients considered a very skilled doctor, restored a certain madman to his former sanity [to his own nature] through harmony. Many miracles among sick men are {said to be} accomplished by this discipline. As we mentioned above, the heaven itself is said to revolve in sweet harmony.²²⁰ To include everything concisely: whatever in heavenly

218 Cf. Alypius, *Isagoge* (368–83 Jan) for this entire section. The order of the modes, however, is that of Aristides Quintilianus (Courcelle, *Late Latin Writers*, 350, note 66).

219 See Holzer, 11–13.

220 Cf. Censorinus, *De die natali* 12.4 (22.3–9 Sallmann); 13.1 (23.1–6 Sallmann); *Variae* 2.40.6–7 (88.46–89.65 Fridh).

and earthly matters occurs in accordance with the management of its Creator, is considered to fall under this discipline.

10. This is, then, a pleasing and useful knowledge, which both raises our understanding to the heights and pleases our ear {with sweet harmony}. Alypius,²²¹ Euclid,²²² and Ptolemy²²³ among the Greeks as well as others have produced laudable instruction on this subject. Among the Latin writers Albinus wrote a book on this subject with summary brevity.²²⁴ I recall that we had this book in our library at Rome and read it eagerly. If by chance this work has been destroyed by the barbarian invasion, you have <here> Gaudentius, <the Latin Gaudentius of Mutianus,> and if you {should} read him with careful attention he {will} open(s) the doors to this discipline for you. Apuleius of Madaura is said to have written in Latin on the elements of this subject.²²⁵ Father Augustine also wrote six books *On Music* in which he showed that the human voice has naturally rhythmical sounds and harmony {capable of} modulation [modulated] in long and short syllables.²²⁶ Censorinus also has a careful discussion on pitches that are {very} important to our voice; [saying] he said these pitches belong to the discipline of music. I have left you his work transcribed among other works.²²⁷

11. Now let us come to geometry, the theoretical description of figures, and also the visible demonstration by which philosophers teach; they, to praise this method of teaching, testify that their Jove used geometry in his own works. I do not know whether this should be considered as praise or blame, since they say in their lies that Jove draws in the heavens what they draw on coloured sand. But if for our salvation we associate this idea with the Creator and omnipotent Lord, it is possible for this thought [from this thought] to agree with the truth, for the holy Trinity, if we may express it

221 Alypius, *Isagoge*, ed. C. Jan, *Musici Scriptores Graeci*, Leipzig: Teubner, 1895, 357–406.

222 Euclid, *Sectio Canonis*, ed. C. Jan, *Musici Scriptores Graeci*, Leipzig: Teubner, 1895, 113–66. Cassiodorus did not use this work, and it may not have been in his library (Courcelle, *Late Latin Writers*, 349).

223 Ingemar Düring, ed., *Die Harmonielehre des Klaudios Ptolemaios*, Goteborg: Elanders boktr. aktiebolag, 1930 [Goteborgs hogskolas årsskrift 36 (1930): 1]. Cassiodorus probably did not use this work and may not have possessed it in his collection (Courcelle, *Late Latin Writers*, 349). Claudius Ptolemaeus (fl. AD 146–70) also wrote a major work on astronomy, the *Almagest* (see below).

224 Albinus: see Kaster 182 (pp. 382–83).

225 This work of Apuleius is lost.

226 Augustine, *De musica*, PL 32.1081–1194. Cassiodorus never used this treatise, and he may not have had this work in his library (Courcelle, *Late Latin Writers*, 349).

227 Censorinus' *De accentibus* is not extant.

thus, uses geometry [is geometry], since it [divinity] has endowed the creatures [that which] it has brought [brings] into being with various species and shapes, and with awesome power it assigns the movements of the stars and makes to move in their assigned orbits the stars that move and established those that are fixed in place. Whatever is well ordered and complete may be attributed to the qualities of this discipline.

VI. Geometry²²⁸

1. Geometry in Latin means the measurement of the earth; some say it is so named because Egypt was first divided among its own lords by various forms of this discipline. In earlier times the teachers of this discipline were called measurers.²²⁹ But Varro, the most learned of the Latin writers, offers the following reason for the name. First the measurement of the earth gave useful peace to wandering peoples {who disagreed} by setting down boundary stones. Then the circle of the whole year was apportioned out by the measurement of the months. As a result, the months themselves were so named because they measure the years. But after these things were discovered, scholars were moved to study intangible phenomena, and began to ask how far the moon was from the earth and the sun from the moon and how far it was to the top of the heavens. He reports that the most learned geometricians arrived at the measurements of these distances. Then he also relates that the measurement of the whole earth was arrived at by a praiseworthy reasoning; thus it came about that the discipline received the name geometry [of geometry] that it bears over the course of the ages.²³⁰ In the book that he wrote to Quintus Cerellius, Censorinus describes with careful

228 For Pythagorean geometry, see Thomas 1.172–225. Cassiodorus probably used Boethius' translation of Euclid, which is not extant, as well as his *Ars geometriae*, of which only a few fragments remain. See *PL* 63.1358C–1364D, and Bubnov, 180–96.

229. Var. 3.52.3–5 (136.16–29 Fridh): *Geometriam quippe... Chaldaei primum inuenisse memorantur... Hanc post Aegyptii... ad dimensionem terrae et recuperandas formas finium transtulerunt... Quapropter agrimensorem peritissimum, cui ab arte nomen est, uestra nihilominus adhibeat magnitudo...* ('As to geometry... it is recorded that the Chaldaeans first discovered it... Later, the Egyptians... transferred geometry to the measurement of land and to restoring the shapes of boundaries... Therefore, your mightiness is likewise to recruit a highly skilled land-surveyor – his name is derived from his art' [trans. Barnish, 72]).

230 Varro, *De geometria*, one of his books on the nine disciplines (see above, n. 79), is not extant. The beginning of this section to this point is excerpted in [Boethius], *Ex demonstratione artis geometricae excerpta* (= *Schriften der römischen Feldmesser*, 1, ed. F. Blume–K. Lachmann–A. Rudorff, Berlin: Georg Reimer, 1848), 393.4–17.

accuracy the size of the heavens and the extent of the earth according to the number of stades.²³¹ Anyone who studies this book will learn many of the mysteries of philosophy in a brief reading.

2. Geometry is the discipline of static magnitudes and figures.²³² Geometry is divided into plane figures; numerable magnitudes; rational and irrational magnitudes; and solid figures.²³³

Plane figures are those that are enclosed by length and breadth.

A numerable magnitude is one that can be divided by arithmetical numbers.

There are rational <and irrational magnitudes:> the measurement of <rational> magnitudes can be known; the measurement of irrational magnitudes is not known.

Solid figures are figures enclosed with length, breadth and height.

3. The science of geometry in its entirety is treated in these parts or divisions, and the multiplicity of figures that exists in earthly and heavenly things is included within them. There are fine Greek writers on this subject, including Euclid, Apollonius, Archimedes, and others.²³⁴ Boethius, the patrician, published [presented] a Latin translation of Euclid. A diligent and careful reading of this work will make the information [facts] presented

231 Censorinus, *De die natali* 13.2 (23.6–9 Sallmann): *nam ut Eratosthenes geometrica ratione collegit maximum terrae circuitum esse stadiorum ducentum quinquaginta duum milium, ita Pythagoras, quot stadia inter terram et singulas stellas essent, indicavit* ('Indeed, as Eratosthenes established by geometric calculation the maximum circumference of the earth as 252,000 stades, so Pythagoras marked how many stades there were between the earth and the individual planets').

232 This definition is excerpted in [Boethius], *Ex demonstratione artis geometricae excerpta* (= *Schriften der römischen Feldmesser*, 1), 393.1.

233 Boethius, *Ars geometriae* (PL 63.1359A): *In quot partes dividitur? Dividitur codex iste in quattuor partes: in epipedis <plane figures>, in arithmetis, in rationalibus et irrationalibus, et in solidis*. Courcelle (*Late Latin Writers*, 351) observes that, in line with this division, Boethius arranged his translation of Euclid's *Elements* as follows: Part 1: Books 1–4; Part 2: Books 5–9; Part 3: Book 10; Part 4: Books 11–15.

234 For Euclid, see Thomas 1.436–505; Apollonius of Perga, Thomas 2.276–357; Archimedes, Thomas 2.18–257. It is doubtful that Cassiodorus had these works at Vivarium. At *Var.* 3.52.7 (137.37 Fridh) Cassiodorus mentions a 'Heron metricus' who wrote on geometry. Several passages in the *Variae* suggest that Boethius also translated Archimedes. *Var.* 1.45, a letter addressed to Boethius and written in 507, states (49.26–27 Fridh): *mechanicum etiam Archimedem Latialem Siculis reddidisti* ('you have even rendered Archimedes the engineer to his native Sicilians in Latin dress' [trans. Barnish, 21]). Cf. *Var.* 1.45.7 (50.50–51 Fridh) and 7.5, a formula (general letter form, without an addressee) which again mention Archimedes. See Courcelle, *Late Latin Writers*, 351 and note 70.

above in the aforesaid divisions available in a clear and distinct manner.²³⁵

4. There remains astronomy. If we seek after the knowledge of astronomy with a pure and moderate mind, it enlightens [fills] our understanding, as the ancients say, with great clarity. It is such a wonderful thing to approach the heavens mentally and to examine that entire celestial structure using rational investigation, and by theoretical speculation explore great hidden mysteries. The universe itself according to some is joined together in a spherical form in such a way that its circumference encloses the different forms of objects. Seneca wrote a book with a discussion suitable to philosophers whose title is *On the Shape of the World*. And we have left [are leaving] this same book for you to read.²³⁶

VII. Astronomy

1. Astronomy, then, means ‘the law of the stars’ in our language, for they can neither remain at rest or move except in the way in which their Creator arranged them, unless they are changed by divine will when some miracle occurs, as Joshua is said to have ordered [asked] the sun to stand still in Gabaon [for three hours] <Joshua 10:12> and a star was shown to the wise men that announced to the world the coming of the Lord bringing salvation <Matthew 2:2>; also in the passion of the Lord Christ the sun was made dark for three hours <Luke 23:44> and the like. These events are called miracles because wondrous things happen against the usual rules of circumstance. For, as the geometers say, those that are fixed in the heaven are borne along;

235 Boethius’ translation of Euclid in four books (see above n. 233) was probably available at Vivarium. This may be why Cassiodorus’ section on geometry is so short, since the monks could read the work on their own (Courcelle, *Late Latin Writers*, 351–52). Cassiodorus quotes this translation twice in his *Exp.Ps.* 1.86–88: *Hoc imitatus conuerso ordine geometricus fecit Euclides dicens: Linea est longitudo sine latitudine. Prius enim dixit quod est et subiunxit postea quod non est.* (‘The geometrician Euclid reversed this procedure [the methods of definition] when he said: “A line is length without breadth” [Euclid 1.definition 2]. First he said what a line is, and then added what it is not’ [trans. Walsh, 1.47]). *Exp.Ps.* 95.331–33: *Sed quomodo quadratus iste demonstrandus intra circulum scribi debeat, Euclides in quarto libro elementorum euidenter insinuat* (‘Euclid in the fourth book of his *Elements* [4.proof 6] clearly explains how this square must be shown to be drawn within the circle’ [trans. Walsh, 2.423]). See Courcelle, *Late Latin Writers*, 351, note 72. From the position in the text of both of these quotations, it is probable that they were added to the commentary at Vivarium.

236 This work is no longer extant. Courcelle (*Late Latin Writers*, 352, note 78) thinks it was probably a missing section of Seneca *Quaestiones naturales*. The entire section 4 is excerpted in [Boethius], *Ex demonstratione artis geometricae excerpta* (= *Schriften der römischen Feldmesser*, 1), 394.1–11.

the planets, that is the wanderers, move, but confine their movements by definite rule.

2.²³⁷ Astronomy is, as we have already said, the study of the movements of the heavenly stars and their configurations. It investigates the regular motions of the stars in relation to each other and in relation to the earth.²³⁸ [The division of astronomy]: spherical position, spherical motion, eastern direction, western direction, northern direction, southern direction, the hemisphere that is above the earth, the hemisphere said to be beneath the earth, circular number [the number of revolution], the precession or forward movement of the stars, the retrogression or backward movement of the stars, the pause of the stars, the correction of computed paths by addition or subtraction, the size of the sun, moon, and earth, eclipse and other phases that occur among these bodies.

Spherical position is the means by which we know the position of a heavenly body on the sphere.

Spherical motion is that by which a sphere moves spherically [the sphere properly moves].

Eastern direction is that direction from which some stars rise.

Western direction is that direction in which some stars set in our view.

Northern direction is that direction that the sun reaches when the days are longer.

Southern direction is that direction that the sun reaches when the nights are longer.

The hemisphere that is above the earth is that [the] part of the sky that we can see completely.

The hemisphere under the earth, as they say, is that which cannot be seen as long as it is under the earth.

The orbital number [number of the orbits] of the stars indicates how much time each star requires to complete its orbit whether in its right ascension or its declination.

The precession or forward movement of the stars is what the Greeks call *propodismos*, i.e., when a star seems to hasten [drive] its regular motion and goes somewhat ahead of its usual course.

The backward motion or regression of the stars is what the Greek call

237 The material in this section does not come directly from Ptolemy's *Almagest*, since Cassiodorus never excerpts the text. It probably derives from a summary or compendium. Courcelle, *Late Latin Writers*, 352–53 and notes 81–85, marks the general parallels between Cassiodorus and Ptolemy at certain points.

238 The same wording of the definition appears at *Exp.Ps.* 148.261–63. It also appears earlier in *Inst.* 2.3.6 and 3.21.

hypodisimos or *anapodisimos*, i.e., when the star in carrying out its motion seems to be moving backwards at the same time.

The Greeks call the pause of the stars *stirigmos* because stars, although always in motion, yet [nevertheless] at certain places seem to stand still. Varro [in] the book that he wrote *On Astrology* says stars are named from standing still.²³⁹

The correction of a computation by addition occurs whenever astronomers add a calculation to a calculation according to the rules of astronomy. The correction of a computation by subtraction occurs when astronomers make a calculation according to the rules of astronomy and judge that a calculation must be subtracted from the computation.

The size of the sun, moon and earth is dealt with to show that the sun is larger than the earth and the earth larger than the moon by a certain amount.

An eclipse of the sun occurs as often as the moon itself appears to us on the thirtieth day and the sun is hidden from us by it, and an eclipse of the moon occurs whenever the moon comes into the shadow of the earth.

3. Men have written books in both languages on the discipline of astronomy; among them Ptolemy is regarded as preeminent among the Greeks. He published two books on the subject, the one of which he called the *Lesser*, the other the *Greater Astronomy*.²⁴⁰ He also [as well] set up the canons²⁴¹ in which the movements of the stars may be found. It seems to me not foolish to learn from these latitudes, perhaps, the length of hours, the course of the moon (to establish Easter), and how eclipses happen lest the simple should be disturbed by some confusion. Now these latitudes are like seven lines drawn east to west. In the regions these lines mark off where

239 Varro's book is not extant. For the etymology, see Maltby, 582. Servius *ad Aen.* 5.42: *stellae ab stando dictae sunt...*; *semper enim fixae sunt* [Servius *ad Geo.* 1.366] ('stars are so-called from being static...; for they are always fixed in place').

240 Cassiodorus is in error here. The *Lesser Astronomy* is a compilation of the 3rd century AD by scholars at Alexandria. It contains works by Euclid, Theodosius of Bythnia (fl. 100 BC), Autolycus (fl. 300 BC), Aristarchus of Samos (fl. 280 BC), and Hypsicles of Alexandria (fl. 175 BC). It may be that this error arose from Cassiodorus' misinterpretation of a statement made by Boethius in the introduction to his work on astronomy, which was based on Ptolemy's *Almagest* (i.e., the *Greater Astronomy*). See Courcelle, *Late Latin Writers*, 352–53.

241 Courcelle, *Late Latin Writers*, 353, note 86, suggests that the use of the word *canones* makes it clear that Cassiodorus was using the summary of the *Almagest* called *προχειρὸν κανόνων διατάξις* ('Arrangement of the Handy Tables'), which Boethius may have translated instead of the entire *Almagest*. The 'Handy Tables' were useful in reckoning the date of Easter. Cf. Cassiodorus' address to Boethius, *Var.* 1.45.4 (49.23–24): *Translationibus enim tuis Pythagoras musicus, Ptolemaeus astronomus leguntur Itali* ('For it is in your translations that Pythagoras the musician and Ptolemy the astronomer are read as Italians' [trans. Barnish, 21]).

human customs differ and animals different in kind are born. These latitudes are named for some famous places: (1) Meroe; (2) Soene; (3) Cata Choras <Lower Egypt>, i.e., Africa; (4) Rhodes; (5) Hellespont; (6) Mesopotum; (7) Borysthenes.²⁴²

Sundials also on which {yet} the hours are shown by the brightness of the sun are accurately set up according to certain definite rules that depend on the various latitudes.²⁴³ Earlier writers – Ptolemy in particular – usefully investigated this matter.

4. An additional benefit we should not overlook is the useful information this discipline provides about the right time for sailing, for ploughing, the dog-star of summer, and the dangerous rains of autumn. The Lord gave some excellence to each of his creations which [so that] we may recognize [it may be recognized] without spiritual harm from its own nature. But other things that are connected with the knowledge of the stars, i.e., knowledge of the future, certainly run contrary to our belief and should be ignored as if they had never been written. On this subject the learned Father Basil in the sixth book {of those} he called the *Hexameron*²⁴⁴ dealt with these matters cautiously and diligently, and removed cares of this sort from the minds of men by holy argument. We recommended this work highly at the beginning of our discussion [on] the Octateuch. Father Augustine in Book 2 of *Christian Learning* also reminds us that ‘this belief is related to the dangerous error of those who {foolishly} weave spells of the fates [foolish facts]’. Consequently, if such a popular belief is not understood, ‘it is more appropriately and honourably despised’.²⁴⁵ Varro, a careful writer, in his volume on *Geometry* compared the shape of the world to an elongated sphere, making its

242 Cf. Ptolemy, *Syntaxis mathematica* 1.1.2 (174–87 Heiberg).

243 See Neugebauer, 2.736ff.

244 See above, *Inst.* 1.1.

245 Augustine, *Doct.Chr.* 2.29.46: *quia familiaris est perniciosissimo errori fatua fata cantantium, commodius honestiusque contemnitur* (‘because it is related to that most destructive error of those who sing of the fatuous Fates, it is more suitable and honourable to despise it’). Cf. *Exp.Ps.* 135.153–57: *Nam quid Creator ageret, si uitas hominum stellis transigere permisisset? Merito uos repudiant ipsi quoque philosophi, qui tantam potestatem uisibilibus rebus inesse dicitis, ut arbitrium tollatis auctori* (‘For what would the Creator have to do if He entrusted men’s lives to the stars to arrange? Even the philosophers rightly reject you for saying that such great power lies in visible objects that you deprive the Creator of control’ [trans. Walsh, 3.355]), and *Exp.Ps.* 148.271–75: *At ubi se in astrologiae partem labilis error infuderit et uitas mortalium de cursu stellarum putauerit colligendas, tunc abominandi, tunc potius caeci sunt, cum se aestimant praeuidere quae Creator nobis utiliter decreuit abscondere* (‘But when the slippery slope of error enters, and directs astronomy towards the role of astrology, expressing the belief that the future lives of mortals are to be inferred from the course of the

form like that of the egg that is round in its latitude but oblong in its length.²⁴⁶ However [But] it will be sufficient for us to know as much of this part [art] as Holy Scripture contains, because it is foolish to follow human reason in this matter on which we know and have as much divine teaching as is useful to us.

{Now that we have completed the discussion of secular teaching, it is clear that these disciplines bring considerable usefulness to our understanding of divine law, as some of the holy Fathers also point out.

Conclusion

1. I believe that with the Lord's aid we have fulfilled our promises to the best of our ability. Let us consider why this arrangement of the disciplines led up to the stars. The obvious purpose was to direct our mind, which has been dedicated to secular wisdom and cleansed by the exercise of the disciplines, from earthly things and to place it in a praiseworthy fashion in the divine structure.

2. Some have been led astray by the beauty and brilliance of the shining stars, and eagerly seek reasons for their own destruction. In their mental blindness they tripped over the motions of the stars and through dangerous calculations that are called astrology (*mathesis*) they were sure that they could foresee the course of events. Not only men of our own language, but also Plato, Aristotle, and other men of high intelligence, who are motivated by the truth of the facts, condemned, in full agreement, astrologers, saying that the only result of such a belief would be confusion.²⁴⁷ If the human race were forced by the inevitability of its birth to various actions, why would good behaviour gain praise or evil behaviour come under the punishment of laws? And although these men were not dedicated to heavenly wisdom, they nevertheless, to bear witness to the truth, rightly attacked the errors of those of whom the Apostle says: 'You are observing days and months; I fear for you lest perhaps I have laboured among you in vain' <Galatians 4:10–11>.

stars, the astronomers must then be accursed and blinded instead, when they reckon that they foresee what the Creator has decided to conceal from us for our profit' [trans. Walsh, 3.456]).

246. Varro, *De geometria* is not extant.

247. Cf. *Exp.Ps.* 70.515–17: *Tantum est ut astrologiam sacrilegam summa intentione fugiamus, quam etiam nobilium philosophorum iudicia damnauerunt* ('The sole exception is that we shall be most careful to eschew astrology, which is sacrilegious, and which the judgments of notable philosophers have also condemned' [trans. Walsh, 2.179]).

The Lord gives fuller command on this subject in Deuteronomy: ‘Let there not be found among you anyone who purifies his son or daughter; divining by means of fire or observing the flight of birds, soothsayer, charmer, diviner, or caster of spells, nor one who consults marvels or questions the dead. Anyone who does such things is an abomination to the Lord your God’ <Deuteronomy 18:10–12>.

3. Let us who truly desire to reach the heavens by the use of our mental faculties believe that God has arranged everything according to his will. Let us reject and condemn the vanities of this world. Let us, as we stated in the first book, look through the books of Divine Scripture, keeping a strict order. For by referring everything to the glory of the Creator, we may usefully bring to the mysteries on high that understanding those men have vainly sought in trying to gain human praise. As blessed Augustine and other most learned Fathers say, secular writings should not be rejected. It is right, however, as Divine Scripture says, to ‘meditate on the law day and night’ <Psalms 1:2; cf. Joshua 1:8>, because from time to time we gain from secular letters commendable knowledge of some matters, but from divine law we gain eternal life.

4. Anyone fired with love for heaven and stripped of earthly desires, who wishes to look at the excellences on high should read the Apocalypse of St John. Fixed in contemplation of it, he will know the Lord Christ who by his providence conceived so many marvellous works, arranged them rationally, completed them with his excellence, and supports them now with the divine spirit, frightens them by his power, controls them by his faithfulness; incomprehensible, ineffable, and known more fully to no one else than to himself. He will also recognize that the Lord sits on his majestic throne, advises the churches through his holy angels, threatens the evil with punishment, promises rewards to the good, and is reverently worshipped with the greatest awe by all the elders, the archangels and the army of the entire heavenly host; and it is their particular and specific duty to sing in harmony with eternal unwearied reverence the glory of the holy Trinity. He also knows this world is ruled by the Lord’s sway, and, at the end of the world, when the Lord wishes, it will be changed for the better. The dead will rise when the angels sound their trumpets, and the human race that had been buried in long infirmity will be restored in a new life. After destroying the son of iniquity he will come, terrible and fearsome, with thunder and lightning before him to judge the world. He will reveal his powers that in his first coming he did not show everywhere because of his provident plan. The reader will know afterwards how the Church, freed from such great labours and calamities,

will rejoice forever with the Lord, and with what justice those who follow the orders of the devil will perish with him. Truly he will be filled with great exultation since he will be perfected by a vision of these things. After these events there will be, as is written, 'a new heaven and a new earth' <Revelation 21:1>; if only we believe this firmly and securely, we will arrive at the sight of that glory by the grace of Christ.

5. But if in this world we wish to be filled with a greater light so that even while we are here we can taste the sweetness of the life to come, let us consider, with as much awe and admiration as human mind temperately is capable of, how the holy Trinity distinct in persons but inseparably connected and consubstantial in nature operates within the universe its creation and is everywhere entire; second, how it does not cease to be present although it is absent in evil; third, that the divine substance is beyond all light and its brightness is unique and cannot as it now is be fully grasped by any of its creations. As the Apostle says, 'We shall see him just as he is' <I John 3:2>; fourth, the nature of compassion that is in Christ the king; that the Lord of angels did not disdain to assume the human condition, but, the life of all, chose to undergo the punishment of the cross. To enable the human race to conquer death, he, who cannot die, deigned to die in the flesh he had assumed – there are other things that various Fathers, filled with divine spirit, have written truly on this subject.

6. On these and like matters indeed all wonder fails, all human investigation surrenders. These are the delights of Christians; this is the great consolation of the sorrowful, since we drive from us the devil and his works by the single-minded consideration of these matters with the Lord's aid. Nevertheless, these things must be regarded with such awe that they are believed continually and without doubt; we must admit that these matters are beyond us, so that in every way they remain fixed in our minds. For although our senses may give way before such considerations, our Father must not in any way stumble. When in his generosity we shall see him, we shall be granted what we cannot achieve here. We shall know without doubt to the best of our ability; we shall see by his kindness insofar as he has granted us the capacity. As the Apostle says: 'We now see through a mirror in an obscure manner, but then face to face' <I Corinthians 13:12>.

7. What is the meaning of this statement that the face of God is promised to the blessed, although He is shaped by no difference in parts? Certainly the face of God is the knowledge of his excellence that we must adore, the holy statement of the divine light, the outstanding greatness of his omnipotence, such great purity of justice, that all other justice compared to his is trivial,

the unchangeable strength of truth, the balanced harmony of patience, the unfailing fullness of goodness, the amazing order of his plan, his marvellous glory and exceptional mercy. O great joy of the faithful, to whom it is promised to see the Lord 'as he is' <I John 3:2>; since they believe most reverently in him, they are already filled with the great hope of blessedness. What will the sight we believe in add when he has already given such great things? Indeed it is a gift beyond value to see the Creator, from whom everything that has life gains its life, from whom everything that exists has its knowledge, from whom everything that has been created is directed, from whom whatever has been restored to the better rises and is repaired, from whom whatever is sought for salvation comes, from whom the virtues proceed by which the world itself is overcome. Although he sustains all things, and as pious judge governs all things in a way we cannot tell of, these will be the sweetest gifts when the merciful Redeemer deigns to appear to us. Such things as these that can be thought about that majesty are what the Apostle calls the face of God.

8. Grant we ask, O Lord, the most glorious holiness of this vision, so that you do not allow those in whom you have stirred up such great desire to be deprived of this goodness. Grant us sight of you who live forever, who deigned to die for us; let us see the glory of your majesty, you who wished to appear humble in our flesh. For even to this world it was granted that you look kindly on your servants; but this world did not receive the ability for your servants to look fully and clearly on your countenance. Be sure, O Lord, to confer these things on those who believe in you, on whom you have bestowed all benefits.

9. On this subject, most beloved brothers, Father Augustine is as usual helpful to the faithful. He presented a full and wonderful discussion of it in the book that he wrote to Paulina *On Seeing God*. At the end of it he discussed clearly and briefly how God is seen.²⁴⁸ Let us not, therefore, trust in our merits but in the grace of the Lord, and continually ask that sight of him be given to us. He generously made a threefold promise to his people when he says: 'Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and you shall find; knock, and it shall be opened to you' <Matthew 7:7; Luke 11:9>. From that, most dear brothers, it turns out that we truly deserve to come to heaven rather by the Lord's generosity than by the way in which the pagans falsely believed they could raise themselves to the structure on high. We may perhaps seem to have exceeded the measure of the book; but in comparison

248. Augustine, *Ep.* 147.15.37 (CSEL 44.310.4–312.2 Goldbacher).

with Genesis and Exodus and other books, these books, which we consider long, begin to be short.}

[After the standard explicit MS **B** adds: 'The archetype codex according to whose exemplars the rest of the codices are to be corrected.' And then, 'Since the two books of the *Institutiones* that briefly considered divine and human readings have been assembled, as far as I thought, and carefully treated, it is time that we now should read the edifying rules of the ancients, i.e., the introductory codex, which serves as a noble and beneficial introduction to sacred readings.']



ON THE SOUL



I. His Friends' Request

Recently I rejoiced in the longed for completion of a work that I had undertaken, when after having been tossed about by the task of composing the twelve books [of the *Variae*], I was welcomed into the peaceful harbour to which I had come perhaps without praise but at least free from care.¹ Yet the sweet throng of my friends has once again urged me out into the sea of thought, asking that since I have the ability to disclose the mysteries of matters so great, I should clarify certain obscurities that I had found both in sacred and secular literature about the substance and activities of the soul.² 'Furthermore,' they say, 'it would be very foolish for us to let ourselves remain ignorant of the soul, the source of much of our knowledge, as though it were something separate from us, since it is useful for us first of all to understand how we gain knowledge. Indeed, it is not strange to speak of one's own perception, since nature when questioned answers herself and does not have far to seek before finding herself. The soul we search for is always with us, present, acting and speaking; yet, even in the midst of these actions, if it is possible, it remains a mystery. Further, since it is aware of itself, the soul ought to be known; the soul is more present to itself the more when it is discussed with greater care. It has been said by wise men that we should know ourselves, but how can we follow this principle if we remain ignorant of ourselves?'³ We wish, for example, to know the counter-clockwise motions of the planets in the heavens and the harmonious movement of the stars down the sky.⁴ Among these some remain at rest and motionless

1 C. Bonner, 'Desired Haven', *Harvard Theological Review* 34 (1941): 49–67.

2 *Var.* 11.praefatio.7 (CCSL 96.421.43–47): *Sed postquam duodecim libris opusculum nostrum desiderato fine concluderam, de animae substantia uel de uirtutibus eius amici me disserere coegerunt, ut per quam multa diximus, de ipsa quoque dicere uideremur* ('But after I had finished my work at the end I sought in twelve books, my friends forced me to speak about the substance of the soul and its powers, so that by which we speak much, we may seem to speak about it also').

3 For this theme, see Courcelle, *Late Latin Writers*, especially 203 and note 100.

4 Macrobius, *Commentarius in Somnium Scipionis* 1.18.19 (73.6–11 Willis): *haec autem quae de sole ac luna diximus, etiam quinque stellarum recessum adsignare sufficient; pari etiam ratione in posteriora signa migrando semper mundanae volubilitati contraria recessione versantur* ('These observations about the sun and moon will also suffice to clarify the backward motion of the other five planets, which move in the same manner into the signs behind, in the opposite direction to that of the rotation of the celestial sphere' [Stahl 161–62]). See Roger L. Beck, 'astrology', *OCD*, 195.

while others whirl constantly in rapid rotation and never come to rest.⁵ These, as secular teachers have tried to show, revolve in delightful harmony with an inestimable rhythm while their tone and consonance produce a single sweet melody.⁶ We also desire to understand the height of the aether, the size of the earth, the cloud-borne rains, raging hailstorms, the quakes of solid ground, the nature of the wandering winds, the depths of the unsteady sea, the powers of green plants and the combinations of the four elements dispersed throughout every body. Are we to accept then that the soul, which has received from above the power to examine such great matters, does not have the power to know itself? We do not ask merely for the sake of discussion, but we are most modestly eager to understand the most profound truths.

Let us, therefore, learn (1) why the soul is called *anima*; (2) what its limits are; (3) what kind of substance it has; (4) whether one should believe it has a form; (5) what moral virtues (called by the Greeks *aretai*) it possesses that add to its honour and glory; (6) what natural powers it has for holding together, so to speak, the body; (7) the origin of the soul; (8) where in particular one should believe it resides, although it is scattered through all the limbs; (9) the form and composition of the body itself; (10) the special properties of the souls of sinners that certain external characteristics reveal; (11) the criteria by which the souls of the just may be known, so that we may infer from plausible signs what we cannot see with our eyes; (12) we particularly desire to know what becomes of the individual at the resurrection, in which the truly wise man believes, so that the frail hearts of mortals may be drawn towards delights divinely promised.

With God's help explain these matters to us following the order set out above, so that we can learn easily and you receive the glory due a scholar.'

⁵ Boethius, *De arithmetica* 1.1 (CCSL 94A.1.1.36–38), with slight changes in wording.

⁶ Cf. Censorinus, *De die natali* 13.1 (22.10.23–4 Sallmann): *Pythagoras prodidit hunc totum mundum musica factum ratione, septemque stellas inter caelum et terram vagas..., motum habere ἑννοθμον et intervalla musicis diastematis congrua, sonitusque varios reddere pro sua quasque altitudine ita concordēs, ut dulcissimam quidem concinant melodiam...* ('Pythagoras stated that our entire universe was made by a musical principle, that the seven planets which wander between the heaven and the earth... have a harmonic movement and distances apart corresponding to musical intervals, and give forth different sounds according to their height, in a concord of such a kind that they produce the sweetest melody').

II. The Author's Answer to Them

I said that these themes were not suitable for imperial rescripts such as I had recently dealt with, but for deep and recondite investigations that clearly require not these our corporeal ears, but the acute and purest hearing of the inner man. Discussion about the soul is not so easy because it is by means of the soul we know how to explain countless facts. The eye, for example, which can see as far as the stars, cannot see itself, and our palate, although it discerns different things by taste is ignorant of its own flavour. The nose, too, inhales various odours of fragrant bodies, but does not know its own odour. Finally, our brain, although it transfers sensation to the other parts of the body, nevertheless – so we read – itself lacks sensation.⁷

Since I was just eagerly concluding my work [*Variae*], what could I in my weariness explain? And in the end, my charming friends, you set me to rethinking (*cogitare*) – a word that, as you know by clear reasoning, is derived from *cogo*⁸ – especially because this subject has been discussed by many, but has virtually been left unexplained. But since I was unable to overcome their devices by these and other arguments, and they were determined not to accept my refusal, I was won over. But I begged them to indulge me for at least a few days and not to expect me to complete this work quickly, since the work they demanded was filled with difficulties. I am reminded of that famous story of Proteus who, bound in chains, was forced to tell what he did not choose to relate voluntarily.⁹ This demand seemed nevertheless bearable, because they urged me to speak about such a significant subject that, if (God willing) it is truly explained, it both properly nourishes the hearer and expands the experience of the one who makes his case well.

7 Aristotle, *De partibus animalium* 2.7 (652 b5–6): ἔτι δὲ μᾶλλον τῷ μηδεμίαν ποιεῖν αἰσθησιν θυγαίνόμενος [ἐγκέφαλος], ὥσπερ οὐδὲ τὸ αἷμα ('This is shown still more unmistakably by the fact that like the blood [the brain]... produces no sensation when it is touched' [trans. Peck, 149 LCL]).

8 Cf. *Exp.Ps.* 39.326–27: *Cogitationes enim a cogendo dictae sunt* ('The word *cogitationes* (purposes) derives from *cogere*, to bring together' [trans. Walsh, ACW 51.405]). Cf. Augustine, *Conf.* 10.11.18 (CCSL 27.164.4): *cogitando quasi colligere* ('thinking as though bringing together') and the note of O'Donnell, *Augustine: 'Confessions'* on 7.1.1 (2.393), and Varro, *De lingua latina* 6.43: *cogitare a cogendo dictum; mens plura in unum cogit unde eligere possit* ('thinking is derived from bringing together; the mind brings together many things into one place from which it can make a choice'). See Maltby, 139, s.v. *cogitatio*.

9 For Proteus and his ability to know the past, present, and future, and to tell it when compelled, see *Odyssey* 4.439–570 and the note of West on 384ff. in A. Heubeck, S. West, J.B. Hainsworth, *Commentary on Homer's Odyssey* I (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1988), 217–18.

Before entering upon the proposed subject, we must cut away ambiguities of nomenclature that obstruct the path like branches, so that a forest of homonyms will not obstruct the course of our discussion with their shadowy forms.

III. Why the Soul is Called *Anima*¹⁰

‘Soul’, first of all, is properly spoken of for man, not for animals whose life is grounded in the blood. This soul, because it is immortal, is correctly called *anima*, ἄναιμα, that is, far removed from the blood. Even after the death of the body, its substance remains perfect as will be shown in due time. But others say that the soul is so named because it animates and gives life to the substance of its body.

Animus is indeed named ἀπὸ τοῦ ἀνέμου, that is, after the wind, because like the wind its thought rushes with exceeding swiftness; this name, however, also arises from the appetite of the soul, which is moved in accord with the quality of its desire.¹¹

The mind (*mens*) derives from μήνη, the moon, which, although it is subject to alternating phases, is nevertheless restored in a perfect kind of newness to its former state. Sometimes reduced by struggles it appears darkened, and then again is restored to its normal strength and its good spirits return.¹²

Spirit, then, is differentiated in three ways. That is properly and truly called spirit which requires nothing, but is required by all creatures. It inspires what it wishes and arranges all things according to what it wishes. It fills everything and is complete in the whole. Motionless in space and

10 For this entire chapter, see Augustine, *De Genesi ad litteram* 7.21 (CSEL 28.217.13–219.24); *De div. quaest. LXXXIII* 7 (CCSL 49A.15.1–7); *De Trinitate* 15.1.1 (CCSL 50.460.1–15); *De natura et origine animae* 4.22.36–23.37 (CSEL 60.413.23–417.17).

11 *Exp.Ps.* 123.1161.83–87: *animus, graecus sermo est ἀπὸ τοῦ ἀνέμου, id est quod mobilitas eius uentis celerrimis comparetur; siue ἄναιμα, quod sanguinem non habeat, utique qui corporalis non est; sicut in libro dictum est, quem de anima, Domino praestante, conscripsimus* (‘Animus (anger, soul) is a Greek word formed from *anemos* (wind), because its movement is comparable to the swiftest breezes, or from *anaima* (bloodlessness) because it is bloodless, since it is not physical, as was stated in the book which with the Lord’s help we wrote on the soul’ [trans. Walsh, ACW 53.284, with slight alteration]). Cf. Lactantius, *De opificio Dei* 17.2 (CSEL 27.55.13): *alii uentum [dixerunt], unde anima uel animus nomen accepit, quod Graece uentus ἄνεμος dicitur* (‘some have said wind, whence *anima* or *animus* [words for ‘soul’] gets its name, because *anemos* in Greek means “wind”).

12 See Maltby, 36, 37, 378.

eternal in will it is uniquely influential over all the highest things. We also call spirit the fine substance invisible to us, created, immortal and endowed with as much power as it can use. Thirdly we give the name spirit to the substance scattered and contained throughout the entire body, which maintains mortal life with essential breath and which never rests but is constantly refreshed by its mobility. And that is why it is not really correct to use *animus* and *mens* for *anima*, but these qualities, because they have first place in the soul, are permissibly so named from time to time.¹³ Nor can 'spirit' be distinctively used for 'soul', because it shares this name with other beings such as angels and powers of the air and with whatever is maintained by 'spirit'.¹⁴ Nor can that spirit that is used in inhaling and exhaling be called *anima*, since it shares this characteristic with animals.

In conclusion, the separate and distinct soul of man is defined as a spiritual substance that is in no degree exhausted by loss of blood.¹⁵

Let us more unrestrictedly discuss the substance of the soul itself now that we have made the necessary division between it and things of like name. So let us first of all, after careful consideration, set up a pregnant definition

13 Cf. Augustine, *De Trinitate* 15.1.1 (CCSL 50A.460.5–9): *quod pertineat ad eam rem quae mens uocatur uel animus. Quo nomine nonnulli auctores linguae latinae, id quod excellit in homine, et non est in pecore, ab anima quae inest et pecori, suo quodam loquendi more distinguunt* ('...that pertains to that thing which is called mind or *animus*. Some Latin authors, according to their own peculiar manner of speech, called *animus* that which excels in man and is not found in the beast, thus distinguishing it from *anima* which is also found in the beast' [trans. McKenna, FOTC 45.451]); Augustine, *De div. quaest. LXXXIII* 7 (CCSL 49A.15.1–7): *Anima aliquando ita dicitur, ut cum mente intelligatur, ueluti cum dicimus hominem ex anima et corpore constare; aliquando ita, ut excepta mente dicatur. Sed cum excepta mente dicitur, ex iis operibus intelligitur quae habemus cum bestiis communia. Bestiae namque carent ratione, quae mentis semper est propria* ('In speaking of the soul [*anima*], one sometimes understands it to involve mind (*mens*), as when we say that a man consists of a soul and a body. At other times, mind is excluded from the meaning of the term. But when mind is excluded from its meaning, soul is understood in relation to those activities which we have in common with the lower animals. For animals lack reason, which is always a feature of mind' [trans. Mosher, FOTC 70.40]).

14 Cf. Ephesians 2:2: *in quibus ambulastis... secundum principem potestatis aeris huius...* ('...in which you once walked, ... following the prince of the power of the air... [RSV]). Presumably for Cassiodorus the 'powers of the air' are the evil spirits that are ruled by Satan.

15 Lactantius, *De opificio Dei* 17.3 (CSEL 27.53.15–18): *non enim si anima sanguine aut per uulnus effuso aut febrium calore consumpto uidetur extinguí, continuo in materia sanguinis animae ratio ponenda est...* ('For the system of the life-giving principle [*anima*] must not be immediately posited in the material of the blood since the life-principle seems to be extinguished either when the blood is poured out from a wound or is consumed by the heat of fevers' [trans. McDonald, FOTC 54.50]).

of the terms so that the consequences that could come to be born are easily recognizable by their likeness to their parent.

IV. The Definition of the Soul

Secular teachers say that the soul is a simple substance, a natural form distinct from the matter of its body, an instrument of the limbs, and a life-giving power.¹⁶ Moreover, the soul of man, as the authority of learned and truthful men concurs, is a distinct spiritual substance¹⁷ created by God that gives life to its body. It is rational and immortal,¹⁸ but can be turned towards either good or evil; it came into being like a freshly laid egg that contains the life of the future bird and the pleasing complexity of its wings. Now let us analyse the definition, since men ordinarily learn more easily those things that are clearer when divided into parts.

Every wise man knows that the soul is or has been fashioned by God, since everything that exists is either creator or creature. No created substance, then, can be a creator since it requires God in order to exist, and cannot give to another the being that it has as a mere possession. We must now admit that the soul is truly created by Divinity which alone can create mortal or immortal beings. For clearly we read in Solomon: ‘And the dust returns to the earth as it once was, and the life breath returns to God who gave it’ [Ecclesiastes 12:7]; and elsewhere: ‘all breath have I made’ [Isaiah 57:16]. Therefore reason both demonstrable and absolute admits that this substance is spiritual because while all bodies have three dimensions – length, width,

16. Cf. Calcidius, *Timaeus* (Plato Latinus IV) 241.8–9 Waszink: *Est igitur anima iuxta Platonem substantia carens corpore semet ipsam mouens rationabilis* (‘Therefore the soul according to Plato is a substance lacking body, self-moving, rational’). Aristotle, *De partibus animalium* 1.5 (645 b14): ἐπεὶ δὲ τὸ μὲν ὄργανον πᾶν ἐνεκά του, τῶν δὲ τοῦ σώματος μορίων ἕκαστον ἐνεκά του, τὸ δὲ οὗ ἐνεκα προᾶξις τις ... ὥστε καὶ σῶμά πως τῆς ψυχῆς ἔνεκεν (‘Now as each of the parts of the body, like every other instrument, is for the sake of some purpose, viz. some action ... so in some way the body exists for the sake of the soul’ [trans. Peck, 103 LCL]).

17. Augustine, *De quantitate animae* 1.2 (CSEL 89.132.25–133.1): *de anima vero quaerenti tibi, cum simplex quiddam et propriae substantiae videatur esse...* (‘...when you ask about the soul, since it seems to be something simple and to have an essence all its own...’ [trans. Colleran, ACW 9.14]).

18. Augustine, *De quantitate animae* 13.22 (CSEL 89.158.6–8): *Nam mihi videtur [anima] esse substantia quaedam rationis particeps regendo corpori adcommodata* (‘[The soul] seems to me to be a special substance, endowed with reason, adapted to rule the body’ [trans. Colleran, ACW 9.40]).

and breadth – nothing of the sort is found in the soul.¹⁹

Secondly as to its union with the body, the soul, although burdened by the body's weight, ponders unceasingly views of the nature of things, thinks deeply about heavenly phenomena, investigates nature intensively and aspires to comprehend deeper knowledge of its own creator. If it were corporeal, it would certainly not discern or see what is spiritual by its own reflections. Therefore let there be no suspicion that the soul is corporeal, since it rejects in every way the definition of body and seeks after principles that sublime spirit alone strives to grasp.²⁰ That is why we are rightly taught also in the Holy Scriptures as well to condemn the visible things of this world; for the soul is incorporeal so that it may rightly strive towards the spiritual to which it recognizes itself to be similar in form.

It certainly possesses a unique substance since no other spirit assumes flesh, experiencing consequently the sorrow or joy in the passions of the

19 Cf. Augustine, *De Genesi ad litteram* 7.21 (CSEL 29.217.18–25): *si enim qui hoc sentiunt hoc dicunt corpus, quod et nos, id est naturam quamlibet longitudine, latitudine, altitudine spatium loci occupantem, neque hoc est anima neque inde facta credenda est. quidquid enim tale est, ut multa non dicam, in quacumque sui parte lineis diuidi uel circumscribi potest; quod anima si pateretur, nullo modo nosse posset tales lineas, quae per longum secari non queunt, quales in corpore non posse inueniri nihilominus nouit* ('If those who follow this opinion agree with us on the definition of a body, namely, any substance occupying space with its length, breadth and height, the soul is not that and must not be thought to be made of that. For whatever is of that nature, to put the matter briefly, can be divided or circumscribed by lines in any of its parts. But if the soul were capable of this, it could not know of lines that cannot be cut lengthwise, though it realizes full well that such lines cannot be found in the world of bodies' [trans. Taylor, ACW 42.21]). Cf. Augustine, *Ep.* 166.2.4 (CSEL 44.551.3–7): *nisi quod per loci spatium aliqua longitudine, latitudine, altitudine ita sistitur uel mouetur, ut maiore sui parte maiorem locum occupet et breuiore breuiorem minusque sit in parte quam in toto, non est corpus anima* (...if it is characteristic of a body to occupy space with a certain length, width, and height, and for it to be so placed or moved that it fills a larger space with a larger part of itself, and a smaller place with a smaller part, and for the part to be less than the whole, then the soul is not a body' [trans. Parsons, FOTC 30.9]); *De quantitate animae* 3.4 (CSEL 89.135.14–17): *possum adfirmare, neque illam longam esse nec latam nec robustam neque aliquid horum, quae in mensuris corporum quaeri solent* ('...I can state definitely that it has no length, no width, no solidity, nor any of the properties generally looked for in measuring bodies' [trans. Collieran, ACW 9.17]).

20 Cf. Augustine, *De Genesi ad litteram* 7.21 (CSEL 28.218.11–14): *desinat ergo nunc interim suspicari se esse corpus, quia, si aliquid tale esset talem se nosset, quae magis se nouit quam caelum et terram, quae per sui corporis oculos nouit* ('Therefore, it should cease now suspecting that it is a body, because if it were, it would know itself as such, as it knows itself better than it knows heaven and earth, which it knows through the eyes of the body [trans. Taylor, ACW 42.21]).

flesh.²¹ The soul is, however, as we have said, the living principle of the body. As soon as the soul is given, it cherishes its prison in an ineffable manner; loving it because it cannot be free.²² The soul is violently affected by the pains of the body. The soul that cannot die fears death and is so fearful of the dangers to its body that one might believe it is the soul that suffers the worst, although it is by nature unable to fail. The soul benefits from the healthy balance of the flesh, feeds on the gaze of the eyes, delights in hearing sound, enjoys the sweetest odours, and is attracted by the necessary pleasure of eating. Although the senses in no way nourish the soul, it is afflicted with the deepest sorrow if deprived of them. It wants not what is naturally suited to itself, but what will benefit the attached limbs. Hence faults contrary to reason often creep in, when the soul, by overindulging the body it loves, provides a place for sin. The life of the body, therefore, depends on the presence of the soul and death is the soul's departure. Thus we call day the time when the sun is traversing the heavens; when the sun has departed, the time is called night. The body, then, lives on the support of the soul, and from it the body receives the capacity for motion.

But since even this concerns the kind of life about which we are speaking, we must understand that when that fiery force has poured into the parts of the body and the living spirit has breathed into the flesh, if the body perchance receives a wound, the soul also is immediately pained, because it is infused throughout the body substantially. If only its power and heat animated the limbs, the soul could not feel the pain of a cut finger, as the sun feels nothing if one tries to cut its rays. Therefore, the soul is whole in its parts. It is not less in one place, more in another, but here it is present more intensely, there in more relaxed fashion, but always where it is extended

21 Cf. Augustine, *De Genesi ad litteram* 7.27 (CSEL 28.224.24–225.1): *sed si ad hoc fit anima, ut mittatur in corpus, quaeri potest, utrum, si noluerit, compellatur: sed melius creditur hoc naturaliter uelle, id est in ea natura creari, ut uelit, sicut naturale nobis est uelle uiuere* ('If the soul is made to be sent into a body, we may ask whether it is compelled to go though unwilling. But it is more reasonable to suppose that it has such a will by nature, that is, the nature with which it is created is such that it wishes a body, just as it is natural for us to wish to live' [trans. Taylor, ACW 42.28]).

22 Cf. Augustine, *Contra Academicos* 1.3.9 (CCSL 29.8.68–70): *Veritatem autem illam solum deum nosse arbitror aut forte hominis animam, cum hoc corpus, hoc est tenebrosus carcerem, dereliquerit* ('But I think that God alone knows the truth—or perhaps the mind of man after it has departed from the body, its dark prison' [trans. Kavanagh, FOTC 5.116]); *Ep.* 166.9.27 (CSEL 44.583.16): *id est in carnem, quae ex Adam propagata est, tamquam in carcerem trudi* ('...driven that is into the flesh which is derived from Adam, as into a prison' [trans. Parsons, FOTC 30.31]).

with life-giving purpose.²³ It collects into one place and unites its limbs; and does not allow what it protects with its life-giving strength to dissolve or waste away. The soul distributes adequate nourishment everywhere maintaining appropriateness and measure in it.²⁴

It seems marvellous besides that an incorporeal substance is bound to very solid bodily limbs, and that in this way dissimilar natures are drawn together into a single connection with the result that the soul cannot separate itself when it wishes nor hold on to the body when it has learned the command of its Creator. The soul meets barriers everywhere when enjoined to remain within the body, but every place is open when the soul is ordered to depart. If a severe and painful wound is inflicted on the body, the soul is not lost without the consent of the Author, just as it is not preserved except by His gift. Thus it happens that often we see those who have been gravely wounded escape death, and others perish from minor injuries.

Who doubts that man indeed has reason? He deals with divine matters, understands human affairs, is schooled in outstanding arts, is educated in worthy sciences; hence man properly excels other animals because seemly reason adorns him. I think that reason is an evident motion of the soul²⁵ that advances from agreed-on facts towards some unknown²⁶ and thus arrives at

23 Augustine, *Ep.* 166.2.4 (CSEL 44.551.7–12): *per totum quippe corpus, quod animat, non locali diffusione sed quadam uitali intentione porrigitur; nam per omnes eius particulas tota simul adest nec minor in minoribus et in maioribus maior sed alicubi intentius alicubi remissius et in omnibus tota et in singulis tota est* ('For the soul extends through the whole body to which it imparts life, not by a distribution in space but by a certain life-giving impetus; it is wholly present in every smallest part, not less in smaller parts and more in larger ones, but in one place more conscious, in another less attentive, yet wholly present in each and all parts' [trans. Parson, FOTC 30.9–10]).

24 Augustine, *De quantitate animae* 33.70 (CSEL 89.218.7–11): *conligit in unum atque in uno tenet, diffluere atque contabescere non sinit, alimenta per membra aequaliter, suis cuique reddit, distribui facit, congruentiam eius modumque conservat, non tantum in pulchritudine, sed etiam in crescendo atque gignendo* ('[The soul] makes of [the body] a unified organism and maintains it as such, keeping it from disintegrating and wasting away. It provides for a proper balanced distribution of nourishment to the body's members. It preserves the body's harmony and proportion, not only in beauty, but also in growth and reproduction' [trans. Colleran, ACW 9.99]).

25 Augustine, *De ordine* 2.11.30 (CCSL 29.124.1–2): *Ratio est motio mentis, ea quae discuntur distinguendi et connectendi potens* ('Reason is a mental operation capable of distinguishing and connecting things that are learned' [trans. Russell, FOTC 5.308]).

26 Augustine, *De quantitate animae* 27.53 (CSEL 89.198.17–19): *propterea me tibi debere adsentiri scientiam nos habere ante rationem, quod cognito aliquo nititur, dum nos ratio ad incognitum ducit* ('...I must agree with you that we have knowledge before reason, because reason proceeds from a basis in something known in leading us to something unknown' [trans. Colleran, ACW 9.79]).

a <previously> hidden truth. The soul wants to move swiftly by conjecture and proofs to what it knows exists in the nature of the universe. That reason should be called true and pure and certain that is kept free of any appearance of falsehood. Thus the soul can somehow apprehend its own thoughts and discuss them through the agency of the tongue in fluent movement.

How much the soul sees, even though fixed in the body!²⁷ Without going beyond itself how many different things does it observe! The soul is, as it were, spread out everywhere, and yet it does not appear that the soul departs: it moves, rises up, wavers, and roams about in itself as if running in a great space. It does not reach out to first principles, but by its own reflections displays to itself whatever it examines in thinking – sometimes what is seen with the eyes of the flesh, sometimes what is conceived in imagination. The soul thinks out each matter clearly and individually, just as it speaks; it gains nothing through the arrangement of the senses since it is confounded by the diversity of impressions; divinity alone brings order out of diversity and at the same time makes everything clear by consistent rules. And so, endowed with abundant reason, the soul has found enormous good by the grace of God. The soul discovered the alphabet and advanced the uses and disciplines of the various arts and sciences, surrounded states with protective walls, created garments of various kinds, diligently forced the earth to produce better crops, rushed across the deep waters on winged ships, cut through huge mountains for the convenience of travellers, enclosed ports in a semicircular shape for the use of ships, adorned the earth with beautifully arranged structures.²⁸ Who would now doubt its reasoning power, since illumined by

27 For this and the following cf. Lactantius, *De opificio Dei* 16.9 (CSEL 27.53.4–10): *an potest aliquis non admirari quod sensus ille vivus atque caelestis qui mens vel animus nuncupatur, tantae mobilitatis est, ut ne tum quidem, cum sopitus est, conquiescat, tantae celeritatis ut uno temporis puncto caelum omne conlustret; si velit, mare pervolet, terras et urbes peragret, omnia denique quae libuerit, quamvis longe lateque submota sint, in conspectu sibi ipse constituat?* ('Or can anyone fail to marvel that that living and heavenly sense power which is called mind or soul is of so much mobility that it does not even rest when it is asleep; and is of such celerity that, in a single instant of time, if it wishes, it surveys the whole heaven, flies over seas, traverses lands and cities, and, in short, places before its own gaze all things which it pleases, no matter how far and wide they may be removed?') [trans. McDonald, FOTC 54.47]).

28 Cf. Augustine, *Civ.* 22.24 (CCSL 48.848.68–76): *Ipse itaque animae humanae mentem dedit, ubi ratio et intelligentia in infante sopita est quodam modo, quasi nulla sit, excitanda scilicet atque exerenda aetatis accessu, qua sit scientiae capax atque doctrinae et habilis perceptioni veritatis et amoris boni, qua capacitate hauriat sapientiam uirtutibusque sit praedita, quibus prudenter, fortiter, temperanter et iuste aduersus errores et cetera ingenerata uitia dimicet eaque nullius rei desiderio nisi boni illius summi atque immutabilis uincat* ('In

its Creator it skilfully makes things worthy of all praise and renown for us to admire?

Now it is time to consider the immortality of the soul. Secular writers have proved in many ways that souls are immortal. They say: if everything that vivifies something else lives in itself, it is immortal; the soul, since it vivifies the body, and lives in itself certainly is immortal. They also say: all that is immortal is simple; the soul indeed is not a harmony and is not composed of many parts, but is a simple nature; the soul, therefore, is immortal.²⁹

regard to the principle of human life, God infused in it a capacity for reasoning and intellection. In infancy, this mental capacity seems, as it were asleep and practically nonexistent, but in the course of years it awakens into a life that involves learning and education, the perception of the true and the pursuit of the good. This capacity flowers into that wisdom and prudence which enable the soul to battle with the arms of prudence, fortitude, temperance, and justice against error, waywardness, and other inborn weaknesses, and to conquer them with a purpose that is no other than that of reaching the supreme and immutable Good [trans. Walsh and Honan, FOTC 24.484]); *De quantitate animae* 33.72 (CSEL 89.220.4–19): *tot artes opificum, agrorum cultus, exstrukiones urbium, variorum aedificiorum ac moliminum multimodo miracula; inventiones tot signorum in litteris, in verbis, in gestu, in cuiuscemodi sono, in picturis atque figmentis; tot gentium linguas, tot instituta, tot nova, tot instaurata; tantum librorum numerum, et cuiuscemodi monumentorum ad custodiendam memoriam, tantamque curam posteritatis; officiorum, potestatum, honorum dignitatumque ordines, sive in familiis, sive domi militiaeque in republica, sive in profanis, sive in sacris apparatusibus; vim ratiocinandi et excogitandi fluvios eloquentiae, carminum varietates, ludendi ac iocandi causa milleformes simulationes, modulandi peritiam, dimetiendi subtilitatem, numerandi disciplinam, praeteritorum ac futurorum ex praesentibus coniecturam. Magna haec et omnino humana* ('...all the arts of craftsmen, the tilling of the soil, the building of cities, the thousand-and-one marvels of various buildings and undertakings, the invention of so many symbols in letters, in words, in gesture, in sound of various kinds, in paintings and statues; the languages of so many people, their many institutions, some new and some revived; the great number of books and records of every sort for the preservation of memory and the great concern shown for posterity; the gradations of duties, prerogatives, honours, and dignities, in family life and in public life – whether civilian or military – in profane and sacred institutions; the power of reason and thought, the floods of eloquence, the varieties of poetry, the thousand forms of mimicries for the purpose of entertainment and jest, the art of music, the accuracy of surveying, the science of arithmetic, the interpretation of the past and future from the present. These things bear the mark of greatness and they are characteristically human' [trans. Colleran, ACW 9.100–101]).

29 Cf. Calcidius 227 (242–243 Waszink): *consequenter docebimus, quod sit anima essentia carens corpore. Principio quod omne corpus penetret idque uiuificet...Deinde omne corpus uel intimo uel externo motu mouetur; quae externo, sine anima sunt; quae interno, cum anima...sequitur ergo, ut etiam immortalis sit et sine ulla generatione, simplex etiam nec ex ulla compositione* ('As a result, we will explain that the soul is a substance without body. First of all, because it enters into every body and gives it life... Second, every body is moved by an internal or external motion; those moved by an external motion are without soul; those moved

Again they say: whatever is not destroyed by an inherent opposition continually maintains itself as immortal. The soul, since it is simple and pure, is without doubt immortal. They add as well: everything rational and self-moving is immortal; the rational soul moves itself, and is therefore immortal. We easily agree with the writings containing truth that souls are immortal. For when we read that they are made in the image and likeness of their Creator,³⁰ who would dare to say against this sacred authority that they are mortal, and so shamelessly assert that they are unlike their Creator. For how could there be an image or likeness of God, if the souls of men were hemmed in by the boundary of death? For He ineffably always living, ineffably always constant, guarding eternity Himself, Who contains everything, fits all in place, He unquestionably has the power as an immortal being to fashion what is immortal and within His means give just proportion of life.

Someone says: in what way am I like God, since I cannot at all create something immortal? We judge that one should answer him thus, using a kind of comparison. Can a painting, which is like us, imitate what we do?³¹ An image can bear some likeness but cannot be all that truth is. We ought to

by an internal motion have soul... It therefore follows that the soul is also immortal and without any coming-to-be as well as single and without any admixture'). For the source of this material, see the commentary of Waszink *ad loc.* Macrobius, *In Somnium Scipionis* 2.13 (2.133.11–135.6 Willis [trans. Stahl, 225–26]); Claudianus Mamertus, *De statu animae* 2.7 (CSEL 11.123.20–124.1) [cf. Plato, *Phaedrus* 245c]: *In Phaedro autem Plato de anima pronuntiat 'Anima' inquit 'immortalis est, quae semper a se ipsa mouetur et aliis causa motus est, corpus autem per se non mouetur'. non ait tantum 'mouet alia' sed 'aliis causa motus est'* ('In the *Phaedrus* Plato speak about the soul: "The soul," he says, "is immortal and that which is always moved by itself and is the cause of movement to other things, the body however is not moved through itself." He does not say only "it moves other things", but "it is the cause of movement to other things"').

30 Cf. Genesis 1:26: *faciamus hominem ad imaginem et similitudinem nostrum* ('Let us make man in our image, after our likeness' [RSV]).

31 Augustine, *De quantitate animae* 2.3 (CSEL 89.134.15–20): *Evodius –Quomodo ergo sum similis Deo, cum immortalia nulla possum facere ut ille? Augustinus –Quomodo nec imago corporis tui potest ualere quod tuum corpus ualeat; sic anima non mirandum est si potentiam tantam non habet, quantam ille ad cuius similitudinem facta est* ('Ev. How then, noting that I cannot make anything immortal, as He can, am I like to God? Aug. Just as the image of your body is not able to do what your body can do, so it is not surprising if the soul does not possess the same power as He in whose likeness it has been made' [trans. Colleran, ACW 9.16]). Cf. Claudianus Mamertus 3.16 (CSEL 11.185.10–14): *Deus incorporeus est, imago autem dei humanus animus, quoniam ad similitudinem et imaginem dei factus est homo. Enimvero imago incorporei corpus esse non potest, igitur quia imago dei est humanus animus, incorporeus est animus humanus* ('God is without body, the human soul the image of God, since man was made in the likeness and image of God. Yet the image of that which is without body cannot be body; therefore because the human soul is the image of God, the human soul is without body').

acknowledge for this reason as well that the soul is immortal because it seeks to think about eternity. After the death of its body, the soul longs to leave its name renowned and desires to be praised forever. Good conscience is most terrified that in the future its name will be stained when recalled by posterity. Thus the more sublime authors agree that whatever is honoured by the dignity of reason is not damaged by the injury of death. Further, truth clearly predicts that it will give continuous punishment to the wicked and perpetual joys to the good. Therefore it is wrong to accept hesitantly what the divine All-powerful graciously promises. But we should not say that this immortality of the soul is such as to be unaffected by any passion, for it is exposed to change and open to trouble. Nevertheless, amid all kinds of irksome events and anxieties, it persists thanks to its persistence. God, however, uniquely is immortal, uniquely is just, uniquely is powerful, uniquely is good, uniquely is holy. Whereas it may be said that these qualities or others like them dwell in both men and angels, still none of these attains to the height of His holy power. For all the lofty virtues that by His generosity are granted to all creatures severally according to their means are fullest and most perfect in that height.

Now we must understand how this immortal soul is thought to live. It lives in itself after the loss of this life, not like a body in which breath respire, but with the same freedom of movement that had been given to the body: pure, subtle, swift, eternal, it sees, hears, touches, and more efficiently employs the remaining senses, no longer understanding these sensations in its parts but knowing all things completely in a spiritual way. Moreover, it is foolish to think that it can do less when free than when it was burdened by the weight of the senseless body. Unquestionably both the angels and the powers of the air and other powers that are made up of sublime and immortal substance have such understanding.

It remains for us to show in an orderly fashion that the soul is liable to perturbation. Would that this fact were uncertain and that we might not easily point out the state in which we often find ourselves. Who doubts that at one time we are exalted with joy and at another dejected in sorrow; now gentle in piety, now fearful in anger; that sometimes we raise our souls to virtue and sometimes turn them away towards vice? We cling to some things and obviously reject others. What now pleases, later displeases. We are edified by the sayings of good men, weakened by converse with evil men, and to the same degree that we profit among the upright we learn to be worse in the company of the wicked. For if a single inflexible principle held us, we would not, with the help of changeability, become good from evil nor

blessed from wicked. But in order to show more clearly the reason for this variety, let us recall, as has been said, that unalterable prudence has not been vouchsafed us. And so we are wise when we conduct ourselves well because of divine enlightenment and we are foolish when blinded by the mists of misdeeds. A state of feeling that comes and goes is always uncertain. God alone is omnipotent. For Him existence is wisdom, power is life, will is act, since everything that is truly good does not come to Him but proceeds from Him.

Wherefore this is the origin of the soul we have been speaking of: because it is changeable, the soul is not to be understood as part of God, as certain wilful and heretical madmen have thought.³² It is not part of the angels, because it can be linked with the flesh, nor of air, nor of water, nor of earth, nor of what is joined together in a reciprocal embrace,³³ but it is a simple and unique nature, a substance distinct from other spirits.³⁴ We ought to note that it is far subtler and brighter than air, since we commonly perceive the air, but we cannot see the soul because of our fleshly state.

An innate mobility always provokes this type of substance to unfold its thoughts gladly. Hence, when we are relaxed and at rest, after the subject-matter of our ordinary thoughts has been removed and we are not intent on daily affairs in the usual way, we dream of all sorts of things, sometimes with true, sometimes with false vision. It is easy for us to be deceived by flitting fantasy while our senses are drugged, since often even when we are awake we are led astray by our contemplation. Often when we concentrate very intently in prayer, we are distracted by thoughts inspired by some

32 Cf. Augustine, *Ep.* 166.2.3 (CSEL 44.549.4): *non est pars dei anima* ('The soul is not part of God' [trans. Parsons, FOTC 30.8]).

33 Augustine, *De quantitate animae* 1.2 (CSEL 89.132.15–17): *Nam neque ex terra neque ex aqua neque ex aere neque ex igni neque ex his omnibus neque ex aliquibus horum coniunctis constare anima puto* ('I do not think, for example, that the soul consists of earth, or of water or air, or fire, or of all of these things together, or any combination of them' [trans. Colleran, ACW 9.14]). Cf. *De Genesi ad litteram* 7.21 (CSEL 28.217.13–18): *Quamobrem nec illud audiendum est, quod quidam putauerunt, quantum quoddam esse corpus unde sint animae, quod nec terra nec aqua sit nec aer nec ignis, sive iste turbulentior atque terrenus, sive ille caelestis purus et lucidus, sed nescio quid aliud, quod careat usitato nomine, sed tamen corpus sit* ('Therefore, no attention should be paid to the opinion of those who have said that the soul is from a fifth corporeal element, not earth or water or air or fire (whether earthly fire familiar to us, which is always in motion, or heavenly fire, which is pure and bright), but some other kind of body, without an established name, which is a body' [trans. Taylor, ACW 42.21]).

34 Cf. Augustine, *De quantitate animae* 1.2 (CSEL 89.132.15–17: *cum simplex quiddam et propriae substantiae videatur esse* ('since [the soul] seems to be something simple and to have an essence all its own' [trans. Colleran, ACW 9.14]).

diversion or other and so it happens that the opposite of what we intended enters our mind.³⁵ We have shown that the soul is changed in this world by an unstable and variable will, that it can both lose and receive good things, that it does not have a constant and inflexible will, but can even change in various ways unintentionally.

We are not among those who say that the soul recalls rather than learns the ordinary arts and the other sciences, since souls are prepared for asking questions that they could have grasped intellectually, and they hear everything as new just as if they had learned nothing of these matters before.³⁶

You see, the pregnant definition has now given birth. Observe that what was hidden has burst forth, if I don't deceive myself, into the light. Nothing has been omitted from the scope of the instructive account set forth: it explains and determines what it had in mind in such a way that neither too much nor too little seems to have been said. Now let us turn our attention to its substantial quality, which you may remember held third place in your list of questions.

35 Cf. *Exp.Ps.* 37.183–87: *Dicit enim uitium, quo maxime humana laborat infirmitas ut modo in oratione prostrati, superfluas res uideamur appetere; modo psalmodiam dicentes terrena cogitemus. Sed de ista illusione quam patimur, sufficienter dictum est in libro quem de anima pro nostra mediocritate conscripsimus* ('[The Psalmist] speaks of a weakness to which human sickness is especially prone. When we are prostrate in prayer we appear to seek unnecessary things, and when singing the psalms we ponder on earthly things. But I have spoken sufficiently about this illusion which we suffer in the book which I wrote to the best of my poor ability on the soul' [trans. Walsh, ACW 51.381]).

36 Cf. Augustine, *De quantitate animae* 20.34 (CSEL 89.173.16–19): *anima... mihi omnes artes secum attulisse videatur; nec aliud quidquam esse id quod dicitur discere, quam reminisci et recordari* ('in my view the soul has brought all the arts with it, and what is called learning is nothing else than remembering and recalling' [trans. Colleran, ACW 9.54]). Augustine later rejected any Platonic notion of the pre-existence of the human soul. On this passage of *De quantitate animae*, see his comments at *Retractationes* 1.7(8).2 (CCSL 57.22.10–15): *In quo libro illud quod dixi 'omnes artes secum attulisse mihi videri, nec aliud quidquam esse id quod dicitur discere quam reminisci et recordari', non sic accipiendum est, quasi ex hoc adprobretur animam uel hic in alio corpore uel alibi siue in corpore siue extra corpus aliquando uixisse, et ea quae interrogata respondet, cum hic non didicerat, in alia uita ante didicisse* ('When I stated in that book that "in my view the soul has brought all the arts with it, and what is called 'learning' is nothing else than remembering and recalling", that is not to be taken as if approval is hereby given to the view that the soul has previously lived either here in another body, or elsewhere, whether in a body or independently of a body; and that the answers it gives to questions, since they were not learned here, were learned before in another life' [trans. Colleran, ACW 9.204]). In *De Trinitate* 12.15.24 (CCSL 50.378.8–10) Augustine fully rejected the Platonic doctrine: *Sed si recordatio haec esset rerum ante cognitarum, non utique omnes uel pene omnes cum illo modo interrogarentur hoc posset* ('But if this were a recollecting of things previously known, then certainly everyone, or almost everyone, would be unable to do the same

V. The Quality of the Soul

Authorities have said that this substance has a fiery quality. It is active because of its ever-moving heat, which gives life to the limbs when the soul has been joined to the body. Further they say that all things in heaven are made up of a fiery element, not the smoky fire of this world, exhaustible and temporal, but calm, nourishing and immortal. This fire neither diminishes nor increases, but continuously endures in the excellence of its origin. It cannot have an end because it is not, like a body, a combination of diverse elements. Being a simple element it does not admit an opposite; and thus it always remains since there is no conflict in its essence. In this way all created beings who have been granted a spiritual substance are said to be immortal.

We would, however, be correct in calling it instead a light because it was created in the image of God.³⁷ It is said to have taken on as much light as was suitable for its capacity at the time of the creation of the universe. For God the omnipotent ‘alone has immortality and dwells in light inaccessible’ [I Timothy 6:16]. This light, as the reasonable mind knows, surpasses all

thing if questioned in this manner’ [trans. McKenna, FOTC 45.366]). Cf. Boethius, *Philos. Cons.* 3.met 11.9–10 and 12.1: *Quodsi Platonis Musa personat verum | quod quisque discit, immemor recordatur. Tum ego: Platoni, inquam, vehementer assentior...* (‘If Plato’s heavenly muse the truth us tell, | We learning things remember them anew. Then I said that I did very well like of Plato’s doctrine...’ [trans. Stewart, 287 LCL]).

37 Cf. Augustine, *De Genesi ad litteram* 4.28 (CSEL 28.127.10–16): *neque enim et Christus sic dicitur lux, quomodo dicitur lapis, sed illud proprie, hoc utique figurate* (‘Christ Himself is not called the Light in the same way as He is called a stone: He is literally the Light but metaphorically a stone’ [trans. Taylor, ACW 14.136]). Augustine, *Contra advers. leg.* 1.7.10 (CCSL 49.43.248–250): *aliud est lux quod est Deus, aliud lux quam fecit Deus. Imcomparabiliter autem melior lux ipse qui fecit, nullo modo indigeret ea luce, quam fecit* (‘One thing is the light which is God, another the light which God makes. Incomparably better is the Light Himself Who made it, in no way would he need that light which he made’). Augustine, *Soliloquia* 1.1.3 (CSEL 89.5.13–15): *Deus intelligibilis lux, in quo et a quo et per quem intelligibiliter lucent, quae intelligibiliter lucent omnia* (‘O God, Intelligible Light in whom and by whom and through whom all those things which have intelligible light have their intelligible light’ [trans. Gilligan, FOTC 5.345]). Augustine, *De Trinitate* 8.2.3 (CCSL 50.271.30–32): *Deus veritas est (Sap. 9:15). Hoc enim scriptum est ‘quoniam Deus lux est’ (I Joan. 1:5): non quomodo isti oculi vident sed quomodo videt cor, cum audit, veritas est* (‘God is Truth. For it is written that “God is light”; not as these eyes see it, but as the heart sees it when it hears, “He is Truth”’ [trans. McKenna, FOTC 45.247]). Cf. Augustine, *Contra Faustum* 20.7 (CSEL 25.541.5–7): *de patris quidem secreto lumine quid uobis dicam, nisi quia lumen cogitare non potestis nisi quale uidere consuestis?* (‘...what shall I say of the secret light of the Father, but that you can think of no light except what you have seen?’ [trans. Stotheret, NPNF 4.254]); Lactantius, *De opificio Dei* 17.3 (CSEL 27.55.21–22): *uidetur ergo anima similis esse lumini* (‘The life-principle seems to be like a light...’ [trans. McDonald, FOTC 54.50]).

brightness or marvels; yet the image has some likeness. But the soul cannot have this light which is truth; rather, that light which we revere is an ineffable mystery that is completely and invisibly present everywhere, the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, one essence and inseparable majesty, splendour above every brightness, glory above all renown, which the very pure mind dedicated to God can partly sense but cannot adequately explain. How can we possibly say enough about something that is incomprehensible to the senses of a living creature? Let us with exceeding piety pass beyond the measure of our soul, and with boundless reverence transcend ourselves in deep and silent thought. Let us also pass beyond the power of the heavenly creatures and profoundly consider the being who created such great things instantly and by a single command. Nevertheless, whatever we marvel at, this creator is a greater wonder; whatever we understand, this creator is beyond it, for the human mind does not reach that unperceivable majesty. And so it makes sense to revere whatever in this power lies within our comprehension, not to seek to learn definitely what its nature and quantity are.

Therefore, taught by these facts, we quite rightly observe that souls have some substantial light since it is written in the Gospel: 'The light that enlightens every man who comes into the world' [John 1:9]. Furthermore when we are deep in thought, we sense a subtle, revolving bright quality in ourselves that observes without sunlight and sees without any external light. If it were not in itself clear and bright, it would not have such great power of observation. This power is not given to what is dark; everything blind becomes torpid. Indeed, so powerful is the soul's light that even things absent can be seen. These souls, however, become much clearer and fixed when through their good deeds they do not draw back from the grace of God. Undoubtedly souls, by means of their seeing power, investigate and understand many difficult things that are concealed in the mystery of nature.

Now let us see whether souls, which we have already said are incorporeal, have forms.

VI. That the Soul Does Not Have Form

Before entering upon the question, it is proper to know the truest understanding of form itself according to the definition of the ancients. I, for my part, define form as the enclosure of space by a line or lines.³⁸ Accordingly,

³⁸ Augustine, *De quantitate animae* 7.11 (CSEL 89.144.9–10): *Figuram interim voco, cum aliquod spatium linea lineisve concluditur...* ('For the present, I call that figure in which some space is enclosed by means of one or more lines...' [trans. Colleran, ACW 9.26]).

one can easily ascertain if souls, which certainly subsist by virtue of their spiritual force, can assume a form. Since every form is either on a surface or in a body, and since surface is only found on a body, and a body, that is, something solid and tangible, the soul is clearly exempt from these conditions. It follows that souls should be thought of as in no way possessing form, but they remain in their own quality without shape or matter.

Nor is there contrary force in what the Apostle says about Christ the Lord: ‘Who though he was in the form of God, did not consider being equal to God’ etc. [Philippians 2:6]. For here the Apostle means nature to be understood. Yet since God is incorporeal and is everywhere whole and incomprehensible, what form could He have? Regarding what we read in the Gospel [Luke 16:23, 24], after the setting of this light the poor man Lazarus was received into the bosom of Abraham, but the rich man, seething in the burning flames, asked for a drop of water whereby his burning might be eased; the passage is clearly placed there so that man will know that he should fear a fatal confidence in the affairs of humankind. The rich man did not speak with a corporeal tongue nor did the other have fingers with which he could have eased the burning of the rich man with drops of water.³⁹ The other passages that contain similar statements should also be understood in this way. It is clear that such statements are made about created beings to support the human fashion of speaking. The Founder Himself is unattainable, immutable, eternally the same. Yet we read that He is angry, and we have often heard that He sleeps; not that such descriptions fit God, but we use them in order to understand more easily and quickly certain matters in human terms.⁴⁰ Thus we often read that souls, formless to us, take on form.

39 Cf. Augustine, *Civ.* 21.10 (CCSL 48.776.28–34): *Dicerem quidem sic arsueros sine ullo corpore spiritus, sicut ardebat apud inferos ille diues, quando dicebat: ‘Crucior in hac flamma,’ nisi conuenienter responderi cernerem talem fuisse illam flammam, quales oculi quos leuauit ad Lazarum uidit, quales lingua cui umorem exiguum desiderauit infundi, qualis digitus Lazari de quo id sibi fieri postulauit; ubi tamen erant sine corporibus animae* (‘I am tempted to say that spirits which are incorporeal will burn in fire in the way that the rich man was burning in hell when he said, “I am tormented in this flame” [Luke 16:24]. But, of course, I can see that someone would remind me that the “flame” in question was no more a flame than the “eyes” which Dives lifted, in order to “see” Lazarus or the “tongue” which he wanted to have cooled or the “finger” which Lazarus was to dip into water; where at all accounts there are souls without bodies’ [trans. Walsh and Honan, FOTC 24.267, slightly altered]).

40 Claudianus Mamertus, *De statu animae* 1.3 (CSEL 11.30.4–6): *quia cum propheticis oraculis uel irasci uel paenitere memoratur (Deus), effectus harum uidelicet passionum considerandi sunt, non adfectus* (‘...since when God is recalled in prophetic utterances to be angry or to repent, the results of these passions must be considered, not the emotional states’).

Another question that concerns some people is whether the soul does or does not have quantity, inasmuch as it is accepted that the soul is enclosed within the human body. But if we recall the truest definition of quantity, one that always embraces individual things in brief compass, the proof easily shines out for us. Indeed mathematicians describe it with a brief statement of fact: all quantity is made up either of continuities, as a tree, a man, or a mountain, or of discontinuous parts, as a chorus, a people, or a heap, etc.⁴¹ But since the soul is neither made up of continuous nor of discontinuous parts, because it is not a body, clearly it cannot possess quantity at all. Wherever it is, it takes on no form and we should not say that it has any quantity. We should believe, however, that the boundaries and quantities of souls are apparent to the Creator. He ‘disposed all things by measure and number and weight’ [Wisdom 11:21], and to Him alone Who made these things are they truly known, Who, by a marvellous power, perceives even our very thoughts as if they were visible objects, Who hears the blood of the innocent crying out,⁴² and finally, Who knows all things even before they come into being.⁴³ It is time to turn to the moral virtues (the Greeks call them *aretai*), which are riches to be sought after, and are truly a precious treasure of souls, by means of which good conscience strives to protect its purity against bodily filth.

41 Cf. Boethius, *De arithmetica* 1.1 (CCSL 94A.1.1.23–30) [Derived from Nicomachus, *Introductio arithmetica* 1.2.4 (4.13–20 Hoche)]: *Essentiae* (τὰ ὄντα Nicomachus) *autem geminae partes sunt, una continua et suis partibus iuncta nec ullis finibus distributa, ut est arbor lapis et omnia mundi huius corpora, quae proprie magnitudines appellantur. Alia uero disiuncta a se et determinata partibus et quasi acervatim in unum redacta concilium, ut grex populus chorus acervus et quidquid, quorum partes propriis extremitatibus terminantur et ab alterius fine discretæ sunt. His proprium nomen est multitudo* (‘Things, however, come in two types, one continuous and joined in its parts and not divided up by any extremities, like a tree, a stone, and all the bodies of this universe, and they are properly [κυρίως καὶ ἰδίως Nicomachus] called ‘magnitudes’. But others are separate from one another and set off in their parts and as it were in heaps and joined together into one whole, like a flock, a chorus, a heap, and the like, whose parts end at their own extremities and are separated by the end of another item. The proper name for these is a “multitude”).

42 Cf. Genesis 4:10: *vox sanguinis fratris tui clamat ad me de terra* (‘The voice of your brother’s blood is crying out to me from the ground’ [RSV]).

43 Daniel 13:42: *Deus... qui nosti omnia antequam fiant* (‘God, You Who know all things before they come to be’). This is part of the apocryphal section of Daniel, devoted to the story of Susanna.

VII. The Moral Virtues of the Soul

First of all the rampart of justice is set against evil and injustice. Its composition, as the ancients chose to set it down, is as follows: Justice is a state of the soul maintained for the common good, which gives to each its due.⁴⁴ Against confusion and uncertainty, prudence is usefully employed, and prudence is the true knowledge of good and evil,. Against misfortune as well as good luck, fortitude stands as a remedy. Fortitude means a deliberate assumption of risk and a steadfast endurance of difficulties. Furthermore, against illicit delights and the pleasures of passion, temperance comes to our aid as moderator, and temperance is the strong and regulating governor of passion and other improper desires of the soul. Thus, by these safeguards, vouchsafed by divine gift, the health of the soul, surrounded as it were by a fourfold breastplate, is protected in this deadly world: something that deserved so much protection cannot be attacked by vices.

But this fourfold glory of virtues is, if I may say so, completed by a three-part division. The first part is contemplation that develops the penetration of our mind to perceive the subtlest matters. The second is judgment that handles the distinction of good and evil through rational assessment. The third is memory where matters considered and reflected on are placed in the innermost recesses of the mind⁴⁵ in a faithful trust so that we may keep in some receptacle, as it were, what we have drunk in by frequent meditation. Our safes, when they have been filled, cannot hold more: this treasury⁴⁶ is not weighed down by its load, but when it has stored much, will seek more because of the desire to know. We have struck the above-mentioned parts as though they were a three-note harmony, for such number delights the soul and makes Divinity rejoice.

44 The definitions of justice and of the three following virtues are taken almost word for word from Cicero, *De inventione* 2.160–65.

45 Cf. Augustine, *Conf.* 10.8.15 (CCSL 27.162.58–59); 10.11.18 (164.10–11): *magna ista uis est memoriae, magna nimis, deus meus, penetrare amplum et infinitum* ('Great is the power of memory, exceeding great, O my God, a vast and unlimited inner chamber' [trans. Bourke, FOTC 21.275]); *et quasi in remotiora penetralia dilabuntur* ('[things in the memory] slip off, as it were, into the more removed recesses' [trans. Bourke, FOTC 21.279]). See the 'Excursus: Memory in Augustine' in the commentary of O'Donnell, 3.174–78, with bibliography, as well as his comments on the cited passages.

46 Cf. Augustine, *Conf.* 10.8.12 (CCSL 27.161.2–4): *et uenio in campos et lata praetoria memoriae, ubi sunt thesauri innumerabilium imaginum de cuiuscemodi rebus sensis inuectarum* ('I come into the fields and broad places of memory, where there are thesauri of innumerable images, brought in from all sorts of sense objects' [trans. Bourke, FOTC, 21.273]). See O'Donnell, *Augustine: 'Confessions'*, 3.173.

Some are wont to raise most subtle questions saying: if Divinity creates perfect and rational souls, why do babies live without sensation, or why does one find young people without intelligence? But who does not observe that the souls of babies, because of the weakness of the body, cannot carry out the functions of the senses or the services of the limbs? If one shuts up a high-blazing fire in a narrow container, it cannot strive upward in its usual way because a very constricting obstacle checks it. To each thing its own power seems sufficient when nothing contrary can oppose it. Thus one finds idiot children because, by an imbalance of the parts of the body or the thickness of the humours caused by a defect in the mother's womb, the imbecilic mind is too much compressed in its dwelling and cannot exercise its strength while restrained in an inappropriate home. We see that even today this happens to idiots whom the Greeks call *niniones*.⁴⁷ Or to speak of a common occurrence, how many people afflicted by diseases are disturbed either by a troubled brain or by paralysis of inner organs and have lost their usual sharp intelligence? How many are changed even by a temporary injury? For even the man who is most often regarded as wise, when full of a lavish meal is so easily dulled by lapsing into bingeing that you could hardly believe the man who speaks so sensibly is even alive, when you see him unable even to move. Nevertheless, I am very sure of one thing – that wise men become far more happy when, thanks to the mercy of the Lord, they are made strangers to such misfortune.

Perhaps there are also other causes that go against the reasonable soul's carrying on its proper movements. But the soul does not increase with the growth of a child nor are different souls of varying quality given to idiots, but just as souls always receive immortality, so also are they generally

47 Cf. Liddell–Scott–Jones, *A Greek–English Lexicon* (Oxford, 1940), s.v. νενὸς εὐήθης Hesychius; Forcellini, *Lexicon totius Latinitatis* (Padua, 1864–1887) s.v. *neniari* = *vana loqui* Gloss. Cf. Abavus, *Glossary – neniae: fatuae, uanae* (*Glossaria Latina* 2, ed. J.F. Mountford, 89); Festus 154.19 – *delementa naenias dicimus* (*Glossaria Latina* 4, ed. W.M. Lindsay, 279). Di Marco, *Concordanza*, 9–10 note 1, takes exception to my emendation of the codices *mones*, citing five passages from Augustine, in which he uses the word *moriones*, only one of which is truly relevant: *De peccatorum meritis* 1.22.32 (CSEL 60.31.22): *quorum nomen ex graeco deriuatum moriones uulgo appellat* ('and the name for them derived from Greek the lower class speakers call *moriones*'). Since the error in the manuscripts suggests that a Greek word originally stood here, *moriones* is possible, but the source of the error is then unclear. Cassiodorus, unlike Augustine in all five passages, does not treat the word as a slang expression. The other four passages use the phrase *quos uulgo moriones uocant* ('whom they call in slang *moriones*'): *De peccatorum meritis* 1.35.66 (CSEL 60.66.15); *Ep.* 143.3 (CSEL 44.253.3); *Ep.* 166.6.17 (CSEL 44.570.13); *Contra Iulianum* 3.4.10 (PL 40.707.36).

considered rational. In children reason, not the soul, increases by long meditation.⁴⁸ Now let us go on to the remaining questions in order.

VIII. The Natural Powers of the Soul

There are five natural powers of the soul according to the ancients. The first is the power of sensation⁴⁹ in every part that has given us the capacity for understanding: through it we sense with our complex imagination all incorporeal things. It also gives vigour to the corporeal senses – sight, hearing, taste, smell and touch by means of which we distinguish between hard and soft, smooth and rough.⁵⁰

Second is the imperative power that orders the organs of the body to execute the different motions that it has decided to carry out, to move from place to place, to emit sounds, to bend the limbs, for example. I have set these down as examples so that I may seem to have spoken of matters like these.

The third is the principal power that we employ on a subject more profoundly and firmly when, removed from all activity, we remain at rest while the bodily senses are still. Hence we believe that those who are ripe in years think better because after the limbs grow old and the bodily senses are weakened, they concentrate on offering advice, and the mind more widely employed becomes more robust because of greater concentration. But, on the other hand, when the limbs are left unused because of excessive weakness, the soul loses sensation since it is natural for souls at the appropriate time to follow the needs of their bodies.

The fourth is the vital power, that is, the natural heat of the soul that has given us life and health through the deployment of its intensity and by the

48 Cf. Augustine, *De quantitate animae* 16.28 (CSEL 89.165.13–19): *non igitur tibi debet videri animus sicut corpus crescendo cum aetate proficere... quidquid anima cum aetate proficit, composque rationis fit, non mihi videtur fieri maior, sed melior* ('You should not think, therefore, that the soul makes progress in the same way as the body, by growing larger with age... whatever progress the soul makes with the advance in age and whatever proficiency it acquires in the use of reason constitutes, so it seems to me, not physical growth but an advance in excellence' [trans. Colleran, ACW 9.46]).

49 Cf. Lactantius, *De opificio Dei* 8.10 (CSEL 27.30): *sensus ille qui dicitur mens* ('that power of sensation that is called mind').

50 Cf. Augustine, *De libero arbitrio* 2.3.8.25 (CCSL 29.241.56–57): *A. Quid ad tactum? E. Molle uel durum, lene uel asperum et multa talia* ('A. What of touch? E. Soft or hard, smooth or rough, and many other such things' [trans. Pontifex, ACW 22.82]).

51 Cf. Aristotle, *De respiratione* 15 478 a12–20: *Διὰ τί δὲ τὰ ἔχοντα δέχεται τὸν ἀέρα καὶ ἀναπνεύουσι, καὶ μάλιστα αὐτῶν ὅσα ἔχουσιν ἔναμιον, αἷτιον τοῦ μὲν ἀναπνεῖν ὁ*

inhalation and exhalation of air.⁵¹

The fifth is delight, that is, the appetite for good and evil that the mind joyfully yearns for.

Notice then, that this series of virtues can be rendered by a fourfold division to maintain the nourishment of the body. The first is the attracting power, seizing from nature what it feels is necessary to it. The second, the retaining power, keeps what is taken in until the useful extract has been taken from it. The third, the transferring power, turns what is taken in into something else and repositions it. The fourth, the expelling power, drives off what will be harmful to it so that its nature may be free.⁵²

We have, as has been vouchsafed us, cut another knot, so to speak; we have climbed as it were the sixth hill so that, with the height of this difficulty levelled we can advance without harm to the remaining problems. Now let us treat the origin of the soul most cautiously since it is a problem full of difficulties.

πνεύμων σομφὸς ὢν καὶ συρίγγων πλήρης. καὶ ἐναμιότατον δὴ μάλιστα τοῦτο τὸ μόριον τῶν καλουμένων σπλάγχνων. ὅσα δὲ ἔχει ἐναμιον αὐτὸ, ταχέας μὲν δεῖται τῆς καταψύξεως διὰ τὸ μικρὰν εἶναι τὴν ῥοπὴν τοῦ ψυχικοῦ πυρός, εἴσω δ' εἰσιέναι διὰ παντός διὰ τὸ πλῆθος τοῦ αἵματος καὶ τῆς θερμότητος. ταῦτα δ' ἀμφοτέρω ὁ μὲν ἄηρ δύναται ῥαδίως ποιεῖν· διὰ γὰρ τὸ λεπτὴν ἔχειν τὴν φύσιν διὰ παντός τε καὶ ταχέως διαδυνόμενος διαπύχει ('The reason why those that have lungs admit the air and breathe, and particularly those which have a lung charged with blood, is that the lung is spongy and full of tubes. This part contains more blood than any other of the internal organs. All creatures that have this part charged with blood need rapid cooling, because there is little margin for variation of their vital fire, and the air must penetrate the whole lung because of the quantity of blood and heat which it contains. Now air can easily fulfil both these functions; for, because its nature is so rarefied, it rapidly pervades the whole and cools it' [trans. Hett, 467–69 LCL]).

52. Cf. Macrobius, *Saturnalia* 7.4.14–18 (1.410.23–411.15 Willis): *quattuor sunt in nobis virtutes quae adminstrandam alimoniam receperunt, quarum una dicitur καθεκτική, quae deorsum trahit cibaria confecta mandibulis... secundae haec cura virtutis est, quam Graeci, quia retentrix est, vocant καθεκτικὴν. tertia, quia cibum in aliud ex alio mutat, vocatur ἀλλοιωτική ... et officio quartae virtutis, cui ἀποκριτική nomen est, procuratur egestio* ('We have in us four active principles, whose function is to deal in the nourishment taken. One of these is called the "attractive" principle, and its draws down the food after it has been masticated by our jaws... This [process of digestion] is the function of the second principle, which is called by the Greek the "retentive" principle. The third principle is called the "transformative" principle, for it changes the form of the good... The duty of the fourth principle, the "excretive", is to effect the discharge of waste matter from the body' [trans. Davies, 458–59, slightly altered]).

IX. The Origin of the Soul

We read that at the founding of the universe Scripture says a body was made from the clay of the earth and the Lord immediately ‘breathed into it’ [Genesis 2:7], and Adam was created as a living soul. He breathed into it, as has been said, to express the dignity of His work, so that something marvellous might be recognized that was brought forth from His mouth. But His breathing signifies the same thing as mandate and command. For how can He Who neither releases breath nor has corporeal cheeks, breathe forth? Many, following this notion, have said that as soon as human seed has been coagulated into a living substance, then and there created souls, discrete and perfect, are given to bodies. Physicians, however, say that the human and mortal animal receives a soul on the fortieth day when it has begun to move in its mother’s womb.⁵³ Others believe that as our most powerful Creator brings forth the seed of the flesh from our body, so also from the quality of the soul a new soul can be generated: thus through the transmission of the fault it can be guilty of original sin, as the Catholic Church believes, unless it has received absolution by the gift of baptism. For how can a baby who does not have the will to sin be found guilty in any way unless somehow in the very origin of souls our guilt was transmitted? Hence, Father Augustine, praiseworthy for his very scrupulous hesitation, says that nothing should be affirmed rashly, but left as a secret of God, like many others things that we in our mediocrity cannot know.⁵⁴ We must believe truly and firmly both that God creates souls

53 Cf. Exodus 21:22–23, where the discussion for Christians begins concerning the time the soul enters the embryo. From Aristotle on, the notion that the embryo begins to move in the womb on the fortieth day after conception is common. Lactantius, *De opificio Dei* 12.6 (CSEL 27.44.10–14) says: *et primum quidem cor hominis effingi, quod in eo sit et uita omnis et sapientia, denique totum opus quadragesimo die consummari* (‘First, then, the heart of a man is fashioned, because in it resides life and all wisdom, and then the whole is consummated by the fortieth day’ [trans. McDonald, FOTC 54.39]), but Lactantius is only speaking of the growth of the embryo. See Waszink, 425–26, and Dölger, 8.

54 Cf. Augustine, *De libero arbitrio* 3.56–59 (CCSL 29.307.16–310.20 [trans. Pontifex, ACW 22.196–201]); *De Genesi ad litteram* 10 (CSEL 28.295–332 [trans. Taylor, ACW 42.96–132]); *Epp.* 143; 166 (CSEL 44.250–62; 545–85 [trans. Parsons, FOTC 20.150–59; 30.6–31]). In *De libero arbitrio* Augustine mentions four different theories of the origin of souls of the descendants of Adam and Eve: (1) propagation of the soul of the parents (*ex traduce*); (2) created by God, the soul is infused into the matter prepared by the parents; (3) it exists before the body, and is placed in it by God; (4) it exists separately and enters a body by a free choice. His principal concern is to explain the inheritance of original sin, and believes that all four provide for that fact. In *Ep.* 166, he inclines to the first view, the so-called ‘traducianism’ or ‘generationism’.

and that for some hidden reason He most justly assigns to them their culpability for the sin of the first man. In such mysterious matters it is better to confess ignorance than to assume a boldness, perhaps dangerous, especially since the Apostle says: 'For "Who has known the mind of the Lord, or who has been His counsellor?"' [Romans 11:34]. And again: 'For we know in part and we prophesy in part' [I Cor. 13:9].

But since the course of our discussion has brought us to the point that we may say in general that souls are guilty because of the transmission of sin, this is the proper place to bring up the soul of Christ the Lord, so that no one perverted and with libellous intent think that it was hedged by a similar restriction. Let us then hear how His origin was prophesied to the Holy Mary ever virgin by a worthy herald. The angel said to her: 'The Holy Spirit shall come upon thee and the power of the Most High shall overshadow thee; and therefore the Holy One to be born shall be called the Son of God' [Luke 1:35]. Who, I ask, would believe that in this majestic conception there was the guilt of original sin, or who would suspect any profane offence of the flesh? Undoubtedly He who was to remove the sins of all came without sin. Conceived by a mysterious inspiration, born of a virgin, He who came that the sin of Adam might be overcome, took nothing from Adam. That very long fetter by which we were bound has been broken; the torrent that swept us along has dried up. Death lost its privileges when our nature accepted the life of the Redeemer. The first man transmitted destruction to posterity; Christ the Lord in His coming brought the kingdom of heaven to believers. For through him man, who through the first man lost his spiritual worth, regains his lost standing. Born in glory, He lived without stain. What could He draw from that first man whom He came to destroy by acting in an opposite manner? His holy life corresponds to His holy birth. He, Who was born without sin was overcome by no worldly blemish. Truly He became man in nature, not in vices. He rejected the sin of the first man, and put on the purest man whom He created; not assuming sin, but accepting the flesh of sin without any harmful corruption.

I have made a digression that was indeed very sweet to me, while attempting to counter unfortunate suspicions. But while I direct my attention to something else, I cannot say much here. I now need to speak of the seat of the soul, following the proposed order of questions.

X. The Seat of the Soul

Some people would have it that the seat of the soul, although it is diffused throughout the whole body, is in the heart,⁵⁵ saying that the purest blood and the vital spirit are contained there. Hence they insist that both good and evil thoughts issue from the heart; and there is no doubt that it is the activity of the soul that can create these effects. Most believe that the soul has its place in the head, resembling in some way (if it is proper to speak in this way though with all due respect) the Divine, Which although It fills everything with Its ineffable substance, nevertheless, as Holy Writ assures us, resides in heaven.⁵⁶ The soul (aware that through divine action it was lofty) properly sought the citadel and occupied such a place in preference to all others, from which the remaining members could be governed and controlled adequately. Even the spherical shape of the head is the most beautiful form in which the immortal and rational soul might make a worthy home for itself.

Let us glance closely at what is corporeal. Mortal fire always aims upwards, and because it has a most refined nature it rushes without hesitation to the higher places. There are other proofs also for this belief: when the most skilled physicians attempt to restore the original firmness of a human skull that has been fractured by a very heavy blow, they often touch the membrane protecting the soft brain when they want to cleanse it of the clotted blood. As soon as the membrane has been touched, the patient falls into such a deep stupor that even if struck sharply elsewhere he cannot feel the blow, but as soon as the hand stops pressing on the brain, he regains his normal consciousness, voice, and sensation; he recognizes what is happening to him.⁵⁷ This phenomenon is not demonstrable in other parts of the body

55 Cf. Lactantius, *De opificio Dei* 16.3 (CSEL 27.52.2): *quidam sedem mentis in pectore esse uoluerunt* ('some would have it that the seat of the mind is in the breast').

56 Cf. Lactantius, *De opificio Dei* 16.4 (CSEL 27.52.7–12): *alii sedem eius in cerebro esse dixerunt, et sane argumentis probabilibus usi sunt, oportuisse scilicet quod totius corporis regimen haberet, potius in summo tamquam in arce corporis habitare nec quicquam esse sublimius quam id quod uniuersum ratione moderetur, sicut ipse mundi dominus et rector in summo est* ('Others have said that the seat of the mind is in the brain. And these have used probable arguments, to be sure. They held that it was reasonable, certainly, for that which had the government of the entire body to reside in its highest part, as though in a citadel; and that nothing should have a higher position than that which moderates the whole by reason, just as the Lord and Ruler of the world Himself is in the highest place' [trans. McDonald, FOTC 54.46]).

57 Cf. Galen, *De placitis Hippocratis et Platonis* 1.6.5–6 (ed. P. De Lacey, *Corpus Medicorum Graecorum* 5.4.1, 2.78.31–80.3): εἰ γὰρ καὶ πρὶν τρωῶσαι θλίψεις ἡντινοῦν αὐτῶν ἀκίνητόν τε καὶ ἀναίσθητον, ἄπνουν τε καὶ ἄφωνον εὐθὺς ἔσται τὸ ζῶον. οὕτω δὲ καπὶ τῶν ἀνθρώπων αὐτῶν ἀνατιτραμένων φαίνεται συμπίπτον. ἐν γὰρ τὰ κατεαγῶτα τῶν

even if they are hollowed out with gaping wounds. In addition even a healthy body shows many indications pertinent to this fact. When someone has been inflamed by excessive anger, and has ignited his soul with the heat of thought, neither an upset of the viscera nor the agitation of his breast distresses him, but he is immediately attacked by a headache indicating that the soul has left traces of its fatigue where we have seen it at work with great force. In the head also we sense that there are certain agitations, certain greater movements of our soul so that things appear before our eyes that everyone knows are not present. We extend the force of our soul into various places and many regions, and by an act of the imagination what has been sought in the different areas of the world is brought to the judgment seat of our head. Secondly, when we are altogether engrossed in thought we lower our eyes, the sensation of hearing is checked, taste ceases, the nostrils are free of odours, the tongue does not speak, and in many ways, through such indications we know that the soul is busy in some way in its own dwelling places.⁵⁸ Therefore the soul, placed on a height (as I believe), sitting like a judge in the court of law, is the

ὁστῶν ἐκκόπτειν ὑποβάλλειν ἀναγκαζομένων ἡμῶν ἀσφαλείας ἕνεκα τοὺς καλουμένους μνηνιγοφύλακας, εἰ βραχεῖ βιαίότερον ἐπιθλίψει τις αὐτοῖς τὸν ἐγγέφαλον, ἀναίσθητός τε καὶ ἀκίνητος ἀπασῶν τῶν καθ' ὁρμὴν κινήσεων ὁ ἄνθρωπος ἀμοτελεῖται ('If even before inflicting a wound you apply pressure on any one of the ventricles, the animal will immediately lose motion and sensation, breath and voice. And the same results are seen in the case of human beings themselves who have undergone trepanning. When we excise the broken fragments of bone we are compelled for safety to insert underneath the instruments called protectors of the dura mater, and if you press the brain with them a little too heavily, the patient is rendered incapable of sensation and of all voluntary movements' [trans. De Lacey, 79–81]).

58 Cf. Augustine, *De Genesi ad litteram* 7.20 (CSEL 28.216.20–217.3): *hinc evidenter elucet, quod plerumque se uehementi cogitationis intentione auertit ab omnibus, ut prae oculis patentibus recteque ualentibus multa posita nesciat et, si maior intentio est, dum ambulabat, repente subsistat, auertens utique imperandi nutum a ministerio motionis, qua pedes agebantur; si autem non tanta est cogitationis intentio, ut figat ambulantem loco, sed tamen tanta est, ut partem illam cerebri mediam nuntiantem corporis motus non uacet aduertere, obliuiscitur aliquando et unde ueniat et quo eat, et transit imprudens uillam, quo tendebat, natura sui corporis sana, sed sua in aliud auocata* ('The difference is evident from the fact that the soul is frequently concentrated in thought and turns itself away from everything, so that it is ignorant of many things which are present before the eyes when they are wide open and able to see. And if a person is intensely occupied with his thoughts while walking, he will suddenly stop and withdraw the command of the will which had set his feet in motion. On the other hand, if his concentration is not intense enough to bring him to a halt, but is sufficient to keep him from attending to the motion of his body as brought to him in a message from the central part of the brain, he sometimes forgets where he came from and where he is going, and without realizing it he passes by the villa for which he was heading, all this time enjoying health of body while his soul is off somewhere else' [trans. Taylor, ACW 42.20]).

moderator of our desires, the judge of good and evil, clarifying uncertainties, rejecting what is harmful provided that the grace of the Divine has shone upon it.

There was, to be sure, a natural blessedness in the first man who possessed free will and an inviolate sense of judgment. Led astray by his unhappy disobedience he lost, because of the trickery of the devil, what he had received in trust for his posterity and could not transmit to us what he lost. This was the source of death and the deterioration of the human race. Thence came ignorance contrary to reason and harmful worries; thence grievous thoughts, darkened reflection, foul desire, neglect of justice, a thousand criminal failings and the many traits that we have in common with animals which Divinity made different from us. For (alas!) the setting of the sun foretells the arrival of calm weather; we recognize the coming storms in the disturbance of the winds; we gather the riches that the year produces in the order of the seasons; we promise ourselves joy meanwhile through the instinct of our unknowing mind. But how could the soul have been ignorant of such a thing if its true worth had been guarded? Since it rebelliously wanted to know the forbidden, it has rightly sunk down in ignorance. For only by means of signs and conjectures does the soul know some things that in their entirety it could have known without difficulty; nevertheless, purified by holy transformation, it received with divine aid what it lost through the wiles of the deceiver. It sees obscure things that it could not know by its own means illuminated by its Creator.

I have said about the soul as much as has been vouchsafed me. But it is fitting that I speak about its temple, because it is unacceptable that the image of God should have been joined to a formless body.

XI. The Situation of the Body⁵⁹

Man is a tall erect animal with the appearance of a beautiful observation point for viewing rational things on high. His harmonious disposition reveals to us great mysteries. First of all, our head is composed of six bones, and is formed in the likeness of the rounded hollow of the heavenly sphere so that the seat of our brain, the organ of knowledge, contains that most perfect number six.⁶⁰

⁵⁹ For this section, cf. Lactantius, *De opificio Dei* 10 (CSEL 21.32–38 [trans. McDonald, FOTC 54.30–34]); Augustine, *Civ.* 22.24 (CCSL 48.846.1–852.220 [trans. Walsh and Honan, FOTC 24.481–89]).

⁶⁰ Cf. Augustine, *De Trinitate* 4.4.7 (CCSL 50.169.1–170.13): *Haec autem ratio simpli ad*

Hence also the eyes are placed like the two most beautiful volumes of the Holy Testaments, like to which all pairs in us derive: ears, nostrils, lips, arms, sides, shanks, legs, feet. For in this mystic duality the composition of the whole body is contained and just as those Testaments look towards unity and contain one knowledge, so these functions join in a single harmonious operation.

But although this symmetry is set out in a lovely distribution and each part shares mutually its ornaments with the other, there are also unique parts that are set in the middle, lest, unfairly encroaching on another place, they deprive another of its proper honour: nose, mouth, throat, chest, navel, and the hanging virile member, organs that are clearly praiseworthy and honourable since they are located in the centre.

Our head that contains all the senses is held upright by the neck as by a column, teaching us that holy religion is set on a single strong base of faith. The tongue, the finest plectrum of our vocal chords, also exists to regulate the concord of our speech, so that articulate words will distinguish us from the confusion of animals. Nor is it unintended that two openings for assimilation should serve one throat, to wit, that all the understanding of the prudent soul, like food taken and cooked by the heat of reason should be set forth in worthy treatises through the twin roads of the Testaments. And since the human body cannot defend itself with horns or teeth or flight as can other animals,⁶¹

duplum oritur quidem a ternario numero; unum quippe ad duo tria sunt. Sed hoc totum quod dixi ad senarium peruenit: unum enim et duo et tria, sex fiunt. Qui numerus propterea perfectus dicitur quia partibus suis completur; habet enim eas tres: sextam, tertiam, dimidiam; nec ulla pars alia quae dici possit quota sit invenitur in eo. Sexta ergo, eius unum est, tertia duo, dimidia tria. Vnum autem et duo et tria consummant eundem senarium. Cuius perfectionem nobis sancta scriptura commendat in eo maxime quod 'deus sex diebus perficit opera sua' et sexto die 'factus est homo ad imaginem dei.' Et sexta aetate generis humani 'filius dei venit' et factus est 'filius hominis' ut nos reformaret 'ad imaginem dei' ('But this ratio of single to the double arises naturally for the number three, for one and two are three; but the sum of these numbers that I have mentioned makes six, for one and two and three are six. Therefore, this number is said to be perfect, because it is completed in its own parts, for it has these three: sixth, third, and half, nor is any other part in it which can be called an aliquot part. For its sixth part is one, its third two, and its half, three. And one, two, and three amount to the same six. Sacred Scripture commends the perfection of this number to us especially in this, that God completed his work in six days, and made man to the image of God on the sixth day. And the Son of God came in the sixth age of the human race and was made the Son of Man, in order to re-form us to the image of God' [trans. McKenna, FOTC 45.139]).

61 Cf. Lactantius, *De opificio Dei* 2.4 (CSEL 27.8.1–5): *itaque alia eorum uel plumis leuibus in sublime suspensa sunt uel suffulta unguis uel instructa cornibus, quibusdam in ore arma sunt dentes aut in pedibus adunci unguis: nulli munimentum ad tutelam sui deest* ('And

a strong breast and arms are given to it to ward off threatened injury with the hands and defend itself by a thrust of the chest as if it were a buckler.

But who would doubt that our genitals have been given us for a great sacrament?⁶² From this source, with God's aid, the fruitful renewal of mankind proceeds, whence mortals do not face extinction, but the race can preserve itself and continue although individuals perish. A worthy organ had it not been stained by vile lust. For what could be more precious if it brought the human race into being without sin? Thus all things were created praise-worthy, if only they had not become foul by polluting sins.

This animate body is, however, governed and ruled by the five senses. Although we share these senses with beasts, in us they are better distinguished and perfected through the use of reasonable judgment.⁶³ The first is

so others of them are suspended in the air by the aid of light feathers or are supported by hoofs or equipped with horns; some have armour in their mouths, teeth, or hooked claws on their feet; none lacks a protection for its own defence' [trans. McDonald, FOTC 54.9]); 3.15 (CSEL 27.13.7–10): *denique cum et corporis non magni homo et exiguarum uirium et ualitudinis sit infirmæ, tamen quoniam id quod est maius accepit, et instructor est ceteris animalibus et ornatio* ('Finally, although man has a body that is not great, since his strength is slight, and since he is of weak health, nevertheless, because what he has received is greater, he is better equipped and more adorned than the other animals' [trans. McDonald, FOTC 54.12–13]).

62 Cf. Lactantius, *De opificio Dei* 13.1–3 (CSEL 27.47.6–14): *Poteram nunc ego ipsorum quoque genitalium membrorum mirificam rationem tibi exponere, nisi me pudor ad huiusmodi sermone reuocaret: itaque a nobis indumento uerecundiae quæ sunt pudenda uelentur. quod ad hanc rem attinet, queri satis est homines impios ac profanos summum nefas admittere, qui diuinum et admirabile dei opus ad propagandam successionem inexcogitabili ratione prouisum et effectum uel ad turpissimos quaestus uel ad obscenæ libidinis pudenda opera conuertunt, ut iam nihil aliud ex re sanctissima petant quam inanem et sterilem uoluptatem* ('Now I could explain to you the marvellous workings of the genital parts of the body also if modesty did not hold me away from a discussion of this type. And so let these matters which ought to be revered be veiled by us in a covering of reticence. With reference to the matter at hand, it is sufficient to complain that impious and profane men commit the greatest crime, who, in themselves, turn this divine and admirable work of God, foreseen and planned by His unfathomable design for the propagation of the race, into either the basest gain or filthy works of obscene lustfulness, so that they no longer seek anything from this holy institution of sex other than empty and sterile pleasure' [trans. McDonald, FOTC 54.41–42]).

63 Cf. Augustine, *De libero arbitrio* 2.26 (CSEL 74.44.8–14): *A. Quid igitur ad quemque sensum pertinent et quid inter se vel omnes vel quidam eorum communiter habeant, non possumus ullo eorum sensu diiudicare? E. Nullo modo sed quodam interiore ista diiudicantur. A. Num forte ipsa est ratio, qua bestiae carent? Nam, ut opinor, ratione ista comprehendimus et ita se habere cognoscimus* ('A. Surely, therefore we cannot distinguish by any of these senses what is the proper object of any sense, and what all or some of them have in common? E. Certainly not; they are distinguished by an inner perception. A. Can this be reason, which beasts lack? It seems to me that by the reason we grant this, and know that it is so' [trans. Pontifex, ACW 22.83]).

sight that receives corporeal colours through the illuminated air and recognizes its own properties in these colours. Vision, as the ancients preferred to define it, is a spiritual force of the soul going out through the pupil of the eye touching things not very far off, but estimating what it can reach and seeing whatever is within its sight.⁶⁴ For if the eyes saw from their interior, they might also surely see themselves. This indeed was the belief of Father Augustine.⁶⁵ The second sense is hearing that receives sounds, the rattling vibrations of the air, in the hollow and spiral-shaped ears and interprets by reason what has been heard. The third is smell that, drawing in various odours, identifies the strength of odoriferous bodies by a suitable inhalation as though some invisible smoke were drawn in by the nostrils. Taste is the fourth sense, the one by which we know the flavour of many things, by the discrimination of the palate. The fifth is touch that has been granted to all the limbs in common. The sense of touch is more developed in our hands that are given to us especially to express our many thoughts as the mind operates. Through them comes another and stronger memory, for we can easily remember what we have forgotten if our hands write it down. They are the creators of various arts and the agents of all our acts. For what would it profit sensation to decide that some things should be done, if a labouring hand were not there to carry them out? Nor do I think one should ignore the fact that our feet and hands are made up of the sum of ten digits so that the course and activity of our life might contain the mysteries of the heavenly decalogues so that we ought not to think or do anything contrary to the law of the Lord.

64 Cf. Augustine, *De Genesi ad litteram* 4.34 (CSEL 28.135.14–19): *et certe iste corporeae lucis est radius, emicans ex oculis nostris et tam longe posita tanta celeritate contingens, ut aestimari compararique non possit. nempe hic et illa omnia tam ampla immensaque spatia simul uno ictu transiri manifestum est et, quid prius posteriusque transeat, nihilo minus certum est* ('Now this is certainly a ray of material light that shines forth from our eyes and touches objects so remote with such speed that it cannot be calculated or equalled. It is obvious, then, that all those measureless spaces are traversed at one time in a single glance; and at the same time it is also certain what part of these spaces is passed first and what part later' [trans. Taylor, ACW 41.144]); Augustine, *De quantitate animae* 23.43 (CSEL 89.185.5–8): *Is [aspectus] enim se foras porrigit et per oculos emicat longius, quaquaversum potest lustrare quod cernimus. Unde fit, ut ibi potius videat, ubi est id quod videt, non unde erumpit, ut videat* ('Sight extends itself outward and through the eyes darts forth far in every possible direction to light up what we see. Hence it happens that it sees rather in the place where the object seen is present, not in the place from which it goes out to see' [trans. Colleran, ACW 9.66]).

65 Cf. Augustine, *De quantitate animae* 23.44 (CSEL 89.186.9–11): *Quae cum ita sint, si tantum ibi viderent oculi ubi sunt, nihil amplius quam seipsos viderent* ('Consequently, if the eyes were to see only where they are, they would see only themselves' [trans. Colleran, ACW 9.67]).

How does the very face show signs of its wisdom? Hidden thoughts are revealed in our appearance and in this manner we discover how our soul and will are operating within. Thus our appearance (*vultus*), which gets its name from will (*voluntas*),⁶⁶ is a mirror of its soul, and what is not perceived as a substance is most clearly apparent in its expression.

How much could be said about the remaining parts of the body! Why are the rows of our gums fastened with thirty-two teeth? Why is our neck composed of seven bones and the spine of twenty-three vertebrae? The twenty-four ribs are curved in arcs as a defence for the viscera so that the tender internal parts are not easily vulnerable to intrusive injury. How suitable is the distribution by which the sinews hold together the whole body! In what way do the veins appropriately irrigate the limbs with nourishing blood? How do the bones filled with marrow give us strength? Why is it usual for our nails to grow continually together with our hair? How beautifully and how usefully the skin dresses our flesh so that the fluid within does not foully flow out nor the beauty vanish when the charm is removed from the colour!

Although the individual parts seem to offer different services to the body, and although one of our parts is placed at the top, another in the middle, and a third at the bottom, they have been joined together in such graceful harmony that all are necessary, all prove useful, as the Apostle said when he united the Church by zealous charity; ‘the eye cannot say to the hand, “I do not need thy help”; nor again the head to the feet, “I have no need of your work.” No, rather, those that seem the more feeble members of the body are much more necessary; and those that we think the less honourable members of the body, we surround with more abundant honour’ [I Cor. 12:21–23]. For God so organized and arranged the body that the parts require mutual assistance.

But because this account is too verbose, let this summary be more than sufficient: no other corporeal animal has been formed to bear such signs of mysteries. The body must have been formed by the highest wisdom, because it seemed suitable for union to a rational soul. Oh marvellous creation of the Highest Artificer, which so arranged the features of the human body that if they had not been burdened by the heavy sins of the first man, they would not have been stripped of great rewards. What benefits was the soul worthy of when it was free that now, though damned, possesses so many goods? But

66 See Maltby, 657. Cf. *Exp.Ps.* 30.475–76: *Vultus enim dicitur ab eo quod cordis uelle per sua signa demonstret* (‘*Vultus* (face) is so called because it reveals by its reactions the wish (*velle*) of the heart’ [trans. Walsh, ACW 51.302]).

this flesh, although attacked by different vices and torn by many wounds is laid low, nevertheless it is this which sings the heavenly psalter and makes for the martyrs' glory. Though punished, human flesh was found worthy of God Who created it and also received the living cross of the Holy Redeemer. Rightly do we believe the body will be spiritual since even here in its mortal state, it glories in having experienced so great a gift. This nature is thus great indeed, but susceptible to daily faults because of original sin; with divine aid, it restores itself by means of fasting, alms and continual prayers. When the soul has been cleansed of the marks of sins, it prepares a clear mind to be worthy of receiving its creator – a temple of faith that has not given a home to sins. I believe that divine mercy has provided that the body be subject to the soul, the soul to itself, and the totality look in a spiritually healthy manner to God the Creator.

Since I have concluded what had to be said, it seems appropriate now to speak about the outward characteristics of souls because, although their substance seems to be one, they are nevertheless greatly differentiated by their distinct qualities. First of all I shall discuss how the habits and customs of evil men are revealed, so that what we cannot see within, we perceive by certain external signs.

XII. How to Recognize Bad Men

All souls that lack right faith are miserable that, like those of the philosophers, follow not the law of the Creator but rather the error of men. Although the philosophers seem to be teachers of ethics and strive to cleanse themselves with the whetstone of learning, they do not avoid the corrosion of superstition. What sort of madness is it to worship an inferior being and to believe that a god who cannot aid himself can be preeminent? It is useless for anyone to have avoided harmful desires, to have scorned weakening luxury, to have fled deceiving folly and to have made himself a stranger to earthly vices, because the man who makes the giver of all good things his enemy surely labours in vain. Whose principles will he obey if he knows not the giver of the law? He walks without a path, looks without light, thinks without reason, rushes with speedy step and yet fails to reach the goal he desires.

These people are able to flourish for the present, but do not bring forth fruit because their grace was not strong in the root, but has prided itself in the mere display of leaves. Yet even those who believe rightly but are soiled by foul crimes are in the same condition, because when they are deeply

enmeshed in sin they lose touch with the Creator. Then the immortal soul becomes dead in its own darkness; it begins to love what dies, and to hate what lives; it despises virtue and, veiled in pitiable darkness, it always clings to vice; this soul lacks purest reason because it has drowned in the depths of perversity. Soon, captive of the ancient enemy, the soul is driven headlong into vice, and through enticements of the flesh, the enemy gains victories from the soul's submission. The soul is ill and always concerned about sin; without being accused, it considers itself guilty. Hence it may be accurately said that for the soul in such a state, death becomes as life, and life as death.

If that Merciful One looks favourably on the soul and deigns to enlighten the mind's eye that has been darkened by bodily excesses, He draws it to a liberating penance and grants the soul that initially seemed to desire its own destruction the ability to save itself. The soul is happier after weeping, raised up higher when it has prostrated itself; it restores with tears what it had lost in gladness, and the soul that under the influence of pleasures had gone over to the enemy now repentant hastens most prosperously to the Lord of salvation.

But although men are not allowed to observe these souls, they nevertheless reveal their qualities by obvious signs, so that we can notice even them of whom we obviously have heard nothing. Evil clouds the countenance, however graceful the body. These men are sad even when rejoicing. They do things that they soon after regret. Abandoned by the urge of their own pleasure, they suddenly return to sadness and their eyes are restless more than is necessary. And again, when they are thinking, these men are uncertain, unsteady, variable, fearful about everything, dependent on the whim of everyone, disturbed by worries, troubled by suspicions. They anxiously consider another's judgments of themselves because they foolishly have lost their own; in seeking life they rush into the disaster of infernal death. While they eagerly seek the light of this world they get the darkness of perpetual night. Often they abandon their proposals unfinished; by a kind of leap they take up something else; even when at rest they seem constantly busy. They live in terror even when no persecutor is attacking them. Their own conscience is their punishment and they endure everything from themselves, although they suffer nothing oppressive from others; even their odour is acrid unless the traces are tempered with sweet perfumes. The man who is offended by his own smell must take delight in exotic scents.

Let us pass on to the souls faithful to the Holy Trinity, souls that retain the teaching preached by the Apostles and that, steadfast in their most glorious will, truly preserve a likeness of the divine form.

XIII. How to Recognize Good Men

There is then a great virtue present in holy souls even in this common life of ours. In peace they war against the flesh, the conqueror of the human race. They are victors over themselves, when, in devotion to their conscience, they delight in inflicting death upon the living body. Woe to the flesh that has not been conquered in this world! For the flesh overcome in this life is surely rewarded in the life to come.

A man, accordingly, who is pure, innocent, and constant, praises everyone, always criticizes himself; although he pleases everyone, he displeases himself alone. It is a sign of exceeding greatness to know one's own smallness, but it is impossible to know this until the divine element has already begun to appear. The more severely these men mortify themselves in their present way of life, the more swiftly they fly up to heaven. They rule the flesh because they serve the Creator, and inasmuch as they know that they are diminutive, they arrive at the height of great perfection. They desire to hurt no one; when injured they always forgive. They expend love even on those who persecute them with a criminal hatred.

Such souls, with God's aid, rule even the harmful spirits, and those evil spirits that the world endures as enemies are overcome by a lesser created being. The souls now placed in the body are more powerful than the evil angels. Now attached to flesh they rule the powers of the air; they rule with divine power the tempters to whom they do not yield. Those souls must be called immortal that are tormented by no penitence and attacked by no sorrow, that cannot attribute to themselves <the evils> that are known to exist. They are rich in poverty, joyful in prison and in the midst of these circumstances rightly propitious to them they are submissive, because <these situations> always come to good men. They are always raised up to braver boldness against their persecutors, since the end of life to them is the beginning of good, and they receive in eternal blessedness what they have shown in this life.

Thus the souls of holy men lingering up to now in this world, although they are distinguished by the great difference of their dwelling, nevertheless are clearly fellow citizens of the good angels, even to a large extent their partners. Moses, for example, opened a path of earth through the sea and crossed the home of the waters with dry feet; and great waves, with a rigidity useful to the wanderers, built up like a wall on both sides, grew hard as rock.⁶⁷ Elijah was found worthy to stop the rainfall; he also obtained the gift

⁶⁷ Cf. Exodus 14:21.

of desired rainfall,⁶⁸ and thus a single man accomplished by his blessed prayers what the general run of mankind was not worthy to command because it was in doubt. To these souls that purify themselves by a heavenly way of life power is given by divine mercy, which man cannot have from the time of his creation because of original sin. Passing through the world they have always been joined to majesty and great events occur so often for these men that they almost rightly cease to be miracles. Elisha opened the eyes of his disciples that did not see the heavenly host and struck the enemy forces with blindness.⁶⁹ Some have deprived fire of flames and restored vital heat to cold corpses, restored life.⁷⁰ They have made fierce lions gather to bury a body,⁷¹ and we read that in place of rafts crocodiles have carried men.⁷² They have turned water into the hardness of rock; they have ordered water to flow from the dryness of rocks⁷³ and we have learned that they have carried live coals without harm to their garments.⁷⁴ They have taught the lame to walk⁷⁵ and the speedy sun to stand still.⁷⁶ A human word altered nature and these men have been received into such great favour that what the world marvelled to find serving the Creator could be subservient even to them.

Why should we now speak about the authority of the voice, when a touch of their clothes has brought healing, and the shadow of an Apostle's body kept away the danger of death?⁷⁷ Thus, the abundance of their merits

68 Cf. I Kings 17:1.

69 Cf. II Kings 6:17.

70 Cf. I Kings 17:20–23; II Kings 4:32–35; Acts 9:36–41; 29:9–12, etc.

71 Cf. Jerome, *Vita S. Pauli* 16 (PL 23.17–28): *Deinde haud procul (duo leones) coeperunt humum pedibus scalpere, arenamque certatim egerentes, unius hominis capacem locum foderunt...* ('Then, not far off two lions began to scratch the earth with their feet, and, in competition removing the soil, dug a hole big enough for one man').

72 Cf. Dionysius Exiguus, *Vita S. Pachomii* 19 (PL 73.241D): *necnon crocodili, siquando necessitas fluuium transire compelleret, eum cum summa subiectione portabant, exponentes eum ad locum quocumque praecepisset* ('...and crocodiles as well, whenever need required him to cross a river, used to carry him with supreme submissiveness, setting him down at the place he had requested').

73 Cf. Exodus 17:5–6; Var. 4.31.2 (CCSL 96.162.12–15): *Imitaris enim antiquissimum Moysen, qui Israhelitico populo longa ariditate siccato de saxi sterilitate copiosos latices eduxit et ad implendum miraculum inde fecit currere umidos liquores, ubi erat sicca durities* ('Imitate indeed Moses of old, who drew quantities of water from the dryness of the rock for the people of Israel thirsty from the long drought and to fulfil the miracle from thence made clear waters to flow, where there was dry hardness').

74 Cf. Daniel 3:19–25 (19–27).

75 Cf. Acts 3:1–7; 14:8–10, etc.

76 Cf. Joshua 10:12–13.

77 Cf. Acts 5:15.

was seen to effect a cure even through something that does not in fact have substance. Such a soul is completely grasped even when its existence cannot be observed.

That man's countenance is always happy and peaceful, strong through fasting, adorned by pallor, made happy by constant tears, made reverend by a long beard, neat without care for his appearance; thus by a just mind men are made more beautiful from opposite qualities. His eyes are joyful and honourably attractive, his speech is truthful and capable of penetrating good hearts, eager to persuade all of the love of God with which he is filled. His very voice is well-modulated, neither weak from being too close to silence nor loud from harsh shouting; it is not broken by harshness, nor moved by fortuitous joys, but one in character and appearance. He is a holy temple, a home of virtues, whose face cannot change since it always seeks constancy. He takes care that even his walk is neither slow nor fast; he heeds no one for his own particular benefit, spares no one for another's sake; counsellor for good, who teaches without arrogance, a free man yet with humility, severe but charitable. As a result it is just as difficult to leave him as it is unpleasant to leave life itself. He loves the redemptive retreat in which he is not attacked by lust nor inflamed by any quarrel; nor is he swollen with pride; he does not envy his brothers; he says nothing to be ashamed of to anyone, listens to nothing foolish. A great throng of vices is overcome without a struggle, because he is supported by the grace of solitude. Finally he fills his tunic (for like his skin, he has only one) with the sweetest odours; it emits a fragrance that surpasses the perfumes of rich India. We recognize in them that the human body has its own perfumes – to be sure, since the body that is not swollen by surfeit does not produce bitter odours. It is easy to recognize the man in whom the power on high deigns to dwell. Our very own soul soon rejoices in such a person and without guidance understands the man it recognizes through heavenly inspiration.

But these qualities should not particularly be admired in the stronger sex. Who would, indeed, be worthy enough to unfold the great powers of virgins and widows who are so drawn by holy love to the teachings of God that they torment themselves with the strength of great endurance and achieve the martyr's crown when the weakness of the flesh is overcome?

We have spoken a great deal about the soul; we have also said what seemed best to say about our body. Let us now direct the attention of our minds to future rewards. After a creature knows itself, it is right that it should hasten with pure mind to its Creator.

XIV. What Souls Do After This Life

You may ask what our souls do after this life and in what form they continue to exist. We give answers taken from various authors. Death is the complete separation of soul and body, the putting off of this life, without any consideration for the desires or needs of the flesh. When we have been deprived of this light by the Creator's command, we at once lose the desires and weaknesses of the body. We are no longer worn out by toil, nor refreshed by food, nor weakened by long fasts, but continuously survive in the nature of our souls. We shall accomplish nothing good or evil, but up to judgment day we either lament according to the evil of our past actions or rejoice in the goodness of our works. We shall then receive the abundant reward for all our deeds when we have either been rejected by the voice of the Lord or admitted into the eternal kingdom. Therefore a restful sleep in this life almost resembles this death, since the soul lays aside the desires and striving of this world, and, with the mind at rest, the untroubled soul forgets what is happening here.

XV. The Life to Come

When bodies have resumed their sex on the day of resurrection with the same speed with which everything was created,⁷⁸ what calamity will it be for the wretched beings to be tormented forever but never die? The soul is handed over to perpetual punishment in such a way that it survives wretchedly for all time – pain without end, punishment without rest, suffering without hope, unalterable evil. For the various vices are punished in such a way that their penalty in no way changes. These are the most miserable of all because they both lose what they love and continuously suffer what they abhor. Theirs is a life without sweet existence, death without healing end, a city without joy, a hateful homeland, bitter dwellings, a company of the gloomy, a crowd of weepers. And what is worse, above all these disasters, is that they realize that those whom they were deceived into believing to be <pagan> gods, can be tortured with them.

There are, however, variations in this very punishment according to the degree of the offences. Just as differing degrees of blessedness are in store for the good, so a variety of punishments surround the evil. Everyone's age

78 Cf. Augustine, *Civ.* 22.17 (CCSL 48.835.6–7): *Sed mihi melius sapere uidentur qui utrumque sexum resurrecturum esse non dubitant* ('For myself, I think that those others are more sensible who have no doubt that both sexes will remain in the resurrection' [trans. Walsh and Honan, FOTC 24.464]).

will clearly be the same and complete, for how can youth exist where there is no growth or old age where there is no decline? Those changes lead to destruction; whatever is eternal is one.

Therefore from this source, as from a vast river, issues forth a stream of dispute over how continuous punishment is supposed to be eternal since decay hardly allows a substance to exist that it does not allow to repair itself at any time. But it is completely unnecessary to think of this in terms of eternal principles. The punishment can also be of such a kind that it tortures without diminishing, and the substance can be of such a kind that it heightens the sense of pain without causing the decline characteristic of mortal things. Likewise, how greatly is our soul on earth afflicted with tortures, yet it does not waste away! So too some mountains burn with extreme heat but nevertheless continue to stand amidst the flames.⁷⁹ The salamander is refreshed by fire and is fed by the heat of the flame.⁸⁰ Some worms are nourished by hot waters.⁸¹ Thus what threatens destruction to some gives sustenance to others. But if such examples drawn from mortal material fortify our understanding, what are we to believe about that eternity where punishment finds nothing mortal to consume? Thus, for the wretched there will be inescapable flames and eternal fire.

Who would doubt that the rewards of the good are eternal since they know that they experience joy and no longer fear sorrow and deserve a happiness that they know will be without end? There the soul will not fear for its own good fortune; the thought of good fortune gained always maintains an eternal joy of its own. They realize that their blessedness is based on the greatest security – their knowledge that now they cannot sin. There our security is no longer shaken by change of fortune; the spirit firmly fixed does not falter, does not waver, is not moved and is settled in such an enduring peace that it allows itself to seek or think of nothing except con-

79. Cf. Augustine, *Civ.* 21.4 (CCSL 48.761.2–5): *quidam notissimi Siciliae montes, qui tanta temporis diuturnitate ac vestustate usque nunc ac deinceps flammis aestuant atque integri perseverant* ('Certain well-known volcanoes in Sicily have been continuously active from the earliest times down to our own day, yet in spite of the fire, the mountains remain intact' [trans. Walsh and Honan, FOTC 24.345]).

80. Cf. Augustine, *Civ.* 21.4 (CCSL 40.8.761.82): *salamandra in ignibus vivit...* ('... the salamander lives in fire...' [trans. Walsh and Honan, FOTC 24.345]).

81. Cf. Augustine, *Civ.* 21.2 (CCSL 48.759.7–11): *nonnullum etiam genus vermium in aquarum calidarum scaturrigine reperiri, quarum fevorem nemo inpune contrectat; illos autem non solum sine ulla sui laesione ibi esse, sed extra esse non posse* ('in certain springs, too hot for any hand to bear, there is found a species of worm that not merely endures heat but cannot live without it' [trans. Walsh and Honan, FOTC 24.340]).

temptation there. Thus whatever pleases prospers, since there will not be a reason for repentance. We shall be at rest there, if rest be granted us by the Creator's gift, not weakened by lazy sloth, but intent upon the grace that grants perfection. Our senses will be filled with the sweetest purity; all our desires will be serene: we shall know without thinking, perceive without error. There, evil will neither be experienced because of another, nor created involuntarily.

We shall have a hunger that delights, a constancy that the mind cannot grow tired of, always loving the Creator and sweetly beholding his glory forever. There noisome monotony shall not tire us, nor foolish complexity confuse us; since such is the nature of the things that affect us there that we do not desire or hope for them to end – productive leisure, restful work, an unfailing unity of soul. Then we are filled with the knowledge of divine wisdom and the true understanding of the universe is not stained by burdensome scholarship, but is apparent in the light of the mind without effort. There the nature of number is revealed; there the demarcation of lines is understood completely, there harmony is made clear, there the movement of the stars is definitely understood by observation, there heavenly truth is immediately seen.⁸² We shall behold the wisdom of God and see how majestically he sets each thing in order. There we shall see how vainly the Church is attacked by the non-Catholics; there we shall see her stand in golden dress at the right hand of her husband and king;⁸³ there we shall see how much vanity of vanities there has been under the sun;⁸⁴ there we shall truly perceive how profitably we were counselled, 'The Lord thy God shalt thou worship and Him only shalt thou serve' [Matt. 4:10], compared to Whom all is trivial, Who never has changed and never shall change, with Whom no one can be other than happy, without Whom no one can be other than miserable.⁸⁵ Thus while the rational and now purified soul reflects on this knowledge, it can find nothing further to seek.

82 Cassiodorus discusses the four 'disciplines', arithmetic, geometry, music, and astronomy in his *Institutiones* 2, chapters 4–7 (130.19–157.22 Mynors). See also I. Hadot, 191–205.

83 Cf. Psalm 44:10.

84 Cf. Ecclesiastes 1:2.

85 Augustine, *De quantitate animae* 34.77 (CSEL 89.226.4–8): [*Deus*] *qui numquam non fuerit, numquam non erit, numquam aliter fuit, numquam aliter erit... cum quo esse non omnes possunt et sine quo esse nemo potest* ('[God] who never was not, never will not be, never was other, never will be other than He is... Not all can be with Him, and no one can be without Him' [trans. Colleran, ACW 9.106–107]).

We can indeed imagine with what reason the spiritual man is filled full of delight, but, as we read, the mind neither can grasp nor speech explain the measure of that sweetness. Happy are they who possess all they desire and who are unshaken by any adversity. There flesh and soul, joined in eternal peace, cannot sense any differences between them; there will be the bodily members that are not debased by fleshly desire but adorned by their accord with spirit; there finally the souls will be radiant with heavenly sobriety, not drunk and polluted by worldly thoughts. Clearly their homes, as we believe, will be in the heavens; they shall not seek the earth that they will not need.

Wherefore, they will not have a mixed dwelling, but the elect will be separated by a great difference from the wicked in the kind and location of their places. Theirs will be a heavenly city, a carefree abode, a homeland containing every delight; a people without dissension, placid inhabitants, men having no need of human affairs, where greedy hunger troubles no one, destructive illness wastes no one; no one blushes at his open nakedness; fierce cold makes no one miserable, and heat does not burn the panting body; no one desires refreshing sleep because there no one is tired. Everything is delightful, everything sweet, all is restful since even the universe itself now has left injurious changes of climate and will offer a most healthful unity in eternal seasons.

There also daylight is continuous and clear sky will be eternal. There indeed the sun is not darkened by any clouds, but everything will shine even more through the grace of the Creator. There the blessed have such radiance of mind and light of intelligence that they, as it is said, are rewarded with sight of the Creator Himself as He is in His majesty.⁸⁶ We are therefore wisely told in the books of the ancients that the cleansed and improved part that also bears His image may truly by God's gift see its Creator. There finally we shall see the source of our belief and there we shall behold the highest, select and singular source by which we improve. Whenever this globe of the sun shines unclouded in this world, how it soothes the sensations of our mind! Earthly light too fills us with great joy when we see it. The flowers we look at refresh us with most welcome pleasure; here and now we gaze upon the green earth, the blue sea, the clear air, the twinkling stars with especial delight. But if created things offer a great sweetness when they appear to our sight, what sweetness is that majesty that has no equal believed to bring when we see it?

86 Cf. I John 3:2 (*Vetus Latina* 26/1, 300).

XVI. God

Then we shall know completely what we now believe for our salvation. We shall be worthy to see it in no other way, unless we now profess what is true: that is, the Trinity, coeternal, unchangeable, distinct in persons but inseparable, filling everything at once with its substantial power, a triple unity and a threefold simplicity, equality in omnipotence, unison in love, oneness in nature. Superbly and uniquely this Trinity simultaneously judges through its justice, spares by its mercy, and works with us by its power.

Incomprehensible power, marvellous blessedness that blesses all that is blest and gives life to every living being and binds together all creation; weighing everything while at the same time judging everything, a power that does not falter in judging since it does not err in perceiving. Although it does not become manifest, it is present in the good; and although it is never lacking, it is absent to the bad; unmoving because it is complete everywhere, unceasing because it always carries out its will. Throughout its whole being it hears and sees, not partially as if looking out from a sense organ, but through its penetrating power knows everything everywhere just as it is. It is also said to smell, taste and move, but these actions are ascribed to it in the human way of believing in order to serve our understanding; whereas it performs all functions far differently by the ineffable power of its majesty.

A holy power creating and setting all things in order, it rules by its own majesty and eternal glory. This incomprehensible, inestimable and eternal power fashions the marvellous vault of the heavens, sets the lands upon the sea, gives direction to the waters, sets the limit to the sea; through a tranquil clear sky He flashes lightning; He thunders with good intent; by the law of His wisdom He governs the lowest and the highest, indeed everything rests on His guidance and is not left to its own power. He grows angry calmly, judges serenely and, without His changing, He took on, in the course of events, the guilt of sinners. Deeply pitying human affairs, straightway he pardons the converted, patiently corrects the sinners; and although He can suffer no contradiction, He endures opposition with great forbearance.⁸⁷

How little we sense here of that ineffability! There we shall fully know how inferior what we marvel at is in the sight of His glory, to Whom the angelic host offers its services, Whom the principalities on high serve with dearest obedience, whom the numberless powers faithfully and firmly obey, and Whom even the highest excellence always requires.

87 Cf. Augustine, *Conf.* 1.4.4 and O'Donnell's commentary ad loc. (2.23–26).

What now should we infer from His unique power since we are now not powerful enough to understand even that which we are sure obeys it? Then set free, we shall understand what we foolishly tried to resist; and called to what heights of great things how vile our occupations seem! It would suffice to see, if only for an instant, what truth promises us we shall contemplate forever. There all misguided investigations are refuted, there our unbelief is overcome by the appearance of truth itself: Kingdom without end, day without night, body without faults, life without death. And since everything is directed to eternity only destruction will perish there. It is important to enjoy these things but it will be even better there where they are endless. Those who are summoned to rewards receive what they pray for. Then truly they know how fortunate was the creation of those who have attained such great things.

O incomprehensible majesty and holiness. In the midst of the works of this world that fill the universe with praise of its Creator, we know that nothing more exceptional exists than the spiritual substances that contemplate their Creator with pure intelligence. All that remains has been created for the delight of those who understand; but these things that honour the Creator have been created for their own blessedness.

It is now time, since the various questions have been answered, to collect my abundant mass of statements in bunches so that, after they are counted by a faithful reckoning, they may be set in the storehouse of memory in a shortened form.

XVII. Summary

First of all, as you may remember, most prudent listeners, we taught that man is uniquely spoken of as having a soul, because of the resemblance of sound in the etymology itself, once we distinguish it from words that hearers could confuse because of a likeness in the terms. Secondly, we perfected the definition of its substance, together with exposition of this subject, so far as it was available to our understanding. Thirdly, we discussed its substantial quality. Fourthly, we showed how the soul cannot have a form. Fifthly, we explained the moral virtues that are boldly set against the vices of this world as if they were some sort of weapon. Sixthly, we said a great deal about the natural virtues of the soul. Seventhly, we expounded what has been said about its origin. Eighthly, we described its seat and power of judgment. Ninthly, we treated the arrangement of the body. Tenthly, we showed the unfaithful soul with its symptoms insofar as it may be seen. Eleventhly, we

touched, as far as we could, on the soul that is enlightened and filled with divinity. Twelfthly, much was, with God's aid, said about the hope for the life to come, so that we would understand that what we believe to be immortal has likewise, eternal rewards.

And so we have closed our little work with the number twelve, which adorns the heavens with a variety of constellations, which fills the year with the charm of the months, which has yielded in a providential arrangement the principal winds for the needs of the earth, which divides the hours of day and night into equal parts, so that rightly even this calculation, which is consecrated in such great arrangements of natural things, might be joined to the interpretation of the soul. It remains, wisest men who flourish in your intelligence, once we have passed over the mass of this world safely, to offer ourselves swiftly to that divine mercy through which the vision of the thinker is most fully illuminated. Let us understand Him, let us love Him, and then we truly know our souls, if we are wise through His beneficence. For He is the powerful and perfect master who speaks truth to our soul and enables us to perceive what He has said with enlightened mind. In the school of Christ indeed no heart can be found unteachable that has committed itself to him with wholeness of mind, nor can the heart be ignorant of what it seeks nor lose what it has gained by pious payment. Therefore, that soul becomes great, valuable, and rich which knows that it is poor in itself; powerful, if it does not reject salutary humility, most happy finally if it should preserve in the flesh what the proud angels in the upper air have lost. No one reaches You, Holy Lord, by raising himself; rather he ascends to You when he has been humbled. Although You are most exalted, You draw nearer to those who are bent in prayer. You have accepted our humbleness; You love what You do not seek for Yourself, You long for what You do not need. For humility is the mother of our life, the sister of charity, the unique guardian of the turbulent soul, opponent and enemy of pride; and just as pride, by the devil's agency is the acknowledged origin of sin, so humility, as Your instrument is the acknowledged source of virtue. You, Christ Lord, wished so to ennoble the soul that You deigned not only to teach, but also to assume the soul. Indeed, You Who shall Yourself judge the world underwent judgment in the adopted nature of man; You, Who Yourself raise up and debase kings, were beaten with whips; You bore foul spitting in your face Which the angels avidly desire to look upon; You drank gall, Who held humankind so sweet that as Lord of all You deigned to take on the nature of a servant; patiently You, Who fill the earth with the varied blossoms of rewards, bore the crown of thorns; You, Who have given life to all creatures, underwent

death. Your humility in the holy incarnation was as great as is Your incomprehensible majesty in divinity. Through you, wonderful Lord, punishment became eternal rest, suffering curable, the death of the faithful the entrance to salvation. Death that used to bring extinction, gives eternal life, and justly, since the force that has taken the life of all men has deservedly lost the right to destroy. The soul granted in shame remains in honour, since death that opened the way to hell now leads to heaven. You, Who make even afflictions themselves a powerful instrument, are truly omnipotent; no king is equal to the poor who belong to You. The purple cannot match the nets of your fisherman, since the purple leads us to worldly misfortunes, while your fishermen's nets take us to the shore of eternal salvation. He who is poor among us is rich in You. You became partner of our mortality that you might make us participants in your eternity. You subdued pride with humility, destroyed the sting of death by Your death. You can do good through the unjust, by turning to good ends what was intended to do injury, judging it more effective to turn injuries to usefulness than to cut out completely the causes of evil. How would the signs of Your good deeds be known if signs also of the opposite were not evident?

XVIII. Prayer

You, therefore, Lord Jesus Christ, Who thus were so inclined to us that You deigned to become man, do not allow to perish in us that which You in Your mercy decided to assume. Our reward is Your pardon. Give me an offering to bring, guard what You demand so that You may be willing to crown what You support. Overcome in us the force of envy that deceives to delight, that delights to destroy; a sweet enemy and a bitter friend.

For You know how fatally the slippery snake creeps in with crawling scales and little by little attacks the whole body, and that its arrival may not be noticed, it leaves no fixed trace in its ingrained widespread movement. It envies also (alas!) peoples who are so great because they were two,⁸⁸ and even now seeks out the worldly whom it makes mortal by its evil entanglements. By deceiving others, it destroys itself, and deserves to be punished unceasingly, because it must be condemned for deceiving all. Wherefore, let

88 There are various views of who the two peoples are. Some think Cassiodorus is referring to the Arian Goths and the Catholic Romans; others to the Ostrogoths and Romans of Italy against the Byzantines. O'Donnell, *Cassiodorus*, 127, note 27, sees here a possible reference to the two cities of Augustine's *City of God*. O'Donnell, *Cassiodorus*, 127–28, properly regards the allusion as obscure.

not the unjust one have power lest our destruction increase; let him not exercise domination over us who has never aided us, but may Your power that created us preserve us. Let him grieve that his work is in vain, so long as he does not see us perish, whose death he desires.

Lord, since in us there is nothing for You to reward, but in You there is always something to bestow, save me from myself and preserve me in You. Wipe out my deeds and rescue what You have made. Then shall I be mine, when I have become Yours. Road without straying, truth without uncertainty, life without end,⁸⁹ let me hate evil done and love the good. Let me place my good fortune in You, always ascribe my misfortune to myself. Let me know how worthless I am without You, let me indeed know what I can be with You. Let me understand who I am, so that I may attain to that which I am not. For as we do not begin to exist except through You, so also without You we cannot be of service. Everything likewise sinks into ruin that has been cut off from devotion to Your majesty. Moreover, to love You is salvation, to fear You is joy, to find You is growth, to lose You is destruction. Finally, it is nobler to serve You than to lay hold of the kingdoms of the world – and rightly, since we are made sons from servants, just men from sinful, free men from slaves. Wherefore let the protection of Your mercy rise up against our sins, the mercy that is given to those who grieve for the witness of its name; so that rewarded by the threefold nature we may perceive the Trinity that grants us grace. We seek because You command us to do so. We knock because You teach us to do so, and You prefer to give without end, Who always move us to ask.

O height of holiness, O incomprehensible depth of mercy, although no one can receive anything if You prevent it, You bear witness that You can suffer assault by our prayers – and rightly, since we ask of the judge that we be not led to penal judgment, and we hope to be saved through the grace of the law-giver that we may not be condemned by the law that has been laid down. To You, Holy King, we hopefully pray, forgive our sins and grant what is not owed to us. All creatures join in praise of You because of the goodness of Your work; we owe to You our existence, we are also in Your debt because we are preserved by Your daily gift. Let us then rejoice for this reason also, most glorious Lord, that we do not ask for Your benefits in vain. Regulate, good Creator, the instrument of our body, so that it can be fitted to the harmony of the mind, and let it not be so strengthened that it is prideful, nor so weakened that it wastes away. You know what things have been truly

89 Cf. John 14:6: *ego sum via et veritas et vita* ('I am the road and truth and life').

kept in bounds. Fill your vessels with good fortune so that there may be no room for misfortunes. Let reason rule, and the flesh serve, since you alone can bring it about that you be not offended by the weakness of the body.

Let these words suffice in the light of our ability, but not in the light of the magnitude of the matters discussed, since we have set forth more than we were asked to do, and the nurturing light of True Scripture has taught these matters briefly and carefully. For they could speak of these matters innocently, who purified by divine help, have earned the right to treat these matters because of their estimable way of life.

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Sites of Latin literary learning in the time of Cassiodorus
Map drawn by Eric Leinberger (after P. Riché)

○ = monastic foundation